

# *Come On Home*

DOUGLAS MALLOCH

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**COME ON HOME**  

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**DOUGLAS MALLOCH**



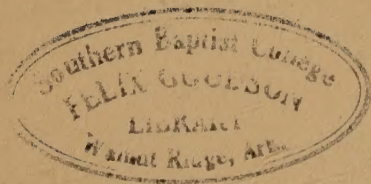


# COME ON HOME

BY

DOUGLAS MALLOCH

AUTHOR OF "TOTE-ROAD AND TRAIL," "THE WOODS,"  
"IN FOREST LAND"



NEW  YORK

GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

66-7185

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**COME ON HOME. II**

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**PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**



AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED TO  
MY DAUGHTER DOROTHY



## COME ON HOME

Come on home, for home is waiting  
When the world's no longer kind;  
Come on home, when tired of hating,  
Sick of sinning, when you find  
Only failure each endeavor;  
Not so sure and not so clever,  
Come on home and heal the scar  
Here where just the home-folks are.

Come on home, for home remembers  
When your new-found friends forget;  
Wide the door and warm the embers,  
Home is even dearer yet.  
Oh, we have such memories of you!  
Come on home and let us love you!  
Hearts are hungry while you roam!  
Pack your things, and come on home!



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**COME ON HOME**



# COME ON HOME

## AFTER ALL

We think all day the things that count  
Are wages, profits—some amount  
We make or earn, or stow away;  
Then sinks the sun, then ends the day,  
Then once again we homeward turn—  
And how we hope the candles burn!

We dream all day of honor, fame,  
We think that praise, applause, acclaim,  
Are worth the winning; then the light  
Dies down the west, and comes the night;  
We homeward turn—and, at the end,  
Oh, how we hope we find a friend!

Gold, honor, these we seek in life;  
The press of crowds, the hurt of strife,  
We bravely bear; then shadows fall,  
And then we hunger, after all,  
For just a house, and just a chair  
Beside a fire, and welcome there.

AUTUMN

You take your Summer, you take your Spring,  
You take your Winter and everything.  
Give me the Autumn, give me the Fall—  
That is the dandiest season of all!

Summer's too hot and your Winter's too cold;  
Spring half the time you are fooled and you're  
sold.

But on the Autumn a man can depend—  
Springtime is fickle, but Autumn's his friend.

Easy on cattle, easy on sheep,  
Easy to handle and easy to keep;  
Colt in the meadow a-runnin' around—  
Autumn suits that fellah down to the ground!

Pleasant for sleepin', and pleasant for work;  
Toil like a Trojan and eat like a Turk.  
None of your sweatin', and none of your freeze—  
Regaler Autumn it is, if you please!

Life is worth livin' along about now—  
Honest to goodness, a pleasure to plow!  
Never a shiver, yet tang in the air—  
No, you can't beat it, no time and nowhere!

Just enough warmness, just enough chill,  
Just enough sunshine up there on the hill;  
Just enough darkness, just enough light;  
Just about medium, just about right!

THE BACHELOR

He walked the way of life alone,  
No wife, no child, no house his own;  
A quiet man, he did not dare  
To think a maiden anywhere  
For such a one would ever care.

Nor did I think a woman would—  
For men are always understood  
The way themselves they understand;  
Yes, so ourselves we often brand,  
And mould our lives with our own hand.

I know he worshipped women, yes  
With strange detachment, tenderness—  
With something now that seems to me  
Much sweeter, holier, to be  
Than loudly shouted chivalry.

And I remember now, at last,  
That oftentimes, when he had passed,  
The eyes of many women turned  
And followed him, as if they yearned  
To tell him what he never learned.

So slipped away the days of youth,  
And John wed Mary, William Ruth.  
The road of life is fair and wide,  
And none is happiness denied;  
And yet he always stepped aside.



The lovely girls of younger days  
He saw take up their wedded ways;  
Alone he faced the storm, the strife,  
And ever lonelier his life  
As friendship turned from friend to wife.

And yet I know what hurt the most:  
As years rolled on, a happy host  
Of little children he would meet,  
Of little children fair and sweet,  
Each morning in the village street.

He always something had for each:  
A scarlet apple, velvet peach,  
Perhaps in wintertime a toy,  
A word of counsel for the boy,  
Some little help, some little joy.

I used to pity him; and then  
One day he did not wake again.  
And yet he did not lie alone,  
The one who wife had never known,  
Nor house nor children of his own.

I thought he knew no woman's love;  
I think he learned at last above,  
From tears that womanhood let fall,  
From sobbing of the children small,  
He was the one most loved of all.

## THE BACK STOOP

The girls and Ma set out in front  
And rock and sew like all possessed,  
And say they can't see why I won't  
Put on a collar and a vest  
And set out there with them and rest;  
But me, I like the back stoop best.

The girls and Ma are primped in white  
(I'm proud of them as I can be),  
But when it comes to restin' right  
Somehow we never can agree.  
There may be more in front to see,  
But this back stoop will do for me.

I'm tired of lookin' at front yards,  
The feeble grass the city's got,  
The railroad tracks and boulevards  
And stony walks and pavements hot,  
To really rest, I tell you what,  
I like the old back stoop a lot.

There's things out here there ain't in front,  
That nowhere else a fellah sees.  
I like to hear the porker grunt  
And watch the collie fightin' fleas,  
To hear the chickens and the bees—  
I'll take the back stoop, if you please.

## COME ON HOME

The common things I cotton to  
That other folks don't think are fine.  
I rather like the back yard view:  
A washin' hangin' on the line,  
A woodpile with its smell of pine—  
I'll take the old back stoop for mine.

In front there may be more to see,  
More "howdies" may be said to you,  
But I've got neighbors here with me:  
For chickens chirp and pigeons coo,  
And bluejays sing a song or two,  
And so the old back stoop will do.

And it don't matter, not a bit,  
Just how you sprawl or how you're dressed,  
Don't matter if your trousers fit  
Or if your coat was ever pressed;  
The back stoop is the place to jest  
Set back and rest, and rest, and rest.

## THE BOY ON FIRST

Forgive me, folks, if I am proud  
And hold my head above the crowd  
And act as if I'm satisfied  
With me myself, the man inside.  
It isn't that at all, at all;  
But see that boy who caught the ball  
And touched the bag and made an out?  
Well, that's what I am proud about,  
That's why I'm proud enough to burst;  
For that's my youngster playing first.

There's pride and pride, and one's the kind  
That ordinarily you find,  
When someone's proud of him himself,  
His job, his title, or his pelf.  
And yet the only pride worth while,  
To give you joy and make you smile,  
Is when it's someone that you love,  
It's someone else, you're proudest of—  
A boy on first who bears your name,  
And loves his dad, and plays the game.

A man must scrimp a hundred ways  
To raise a family these days;  
But he can work and he can win,  
Work day and night and work like sin,  
If he can have, to make him glad,  
A boy he's proud of, lucky dad!

COME ON HOME

And boys, you boys, remember that—  
That's what he's working for, and at:  
Just be the boy at school, at play,  
Your dad is proud of every day.



## THE BRIDE

She will seem different some day:  
Now hand-in-hand you start the way  
The young call love, that we call life,  
You and your queen, that we call wife.

“Well, love or life, or what you will,  
It all is very pleasant still;  
And wife or queen, or what you please,  
She beauty is, and melodies—

“So merry laughs, so witty talks,  
More steps she dances than she walks,  
And true, however age may say,  
She will seem different some day.”

She will seem different, my boy,  
Though sweet, will seem a sweeter joy,  
This lovely breast, this lovely brow,  
Be even lovelier than now.

She who is fair will fairer seem  
Than youth can understand or dream;  
Though cheeks may pale to roses faint,  
Your queen that was shall seem a saint.

“Old age, you speak a mystery:  
How can my bride so fairer be?”  
Some day, when laughing days are done,  
She shall be mother of thy son.

## BRING UP THE ELEPHANTS

Just when the sky was getting light  
The Barnum show would come our way  
And pitch its tents that once were white  
On Mason's Forty for a day;  
And all the kids were on the spot  
With yawning mouths and sleepy eyes  
To hang around the circus lot  
And watch the canvas city rise.

They had the usual circus luck  
On Third or Jefferson or Grand,  
For now and then a wagon stuck  
Up to the axles in the sand.  
The teams would strain, and breathe a spell,  
Then look around like one who hunts  
For help—and then some man would yell,  
“Hi-there! Bring up the elephunts!”

And then a box-car with four legs,  
Big ears, a swinging trunk between,  
And feet that crushed the walks like eggs,  
Would just come slowly up and lean  
Head-on against the wagon's rear  
And grunt and snort a little bit,  
Then shove that wagon in the clear  
And put it where they wanted it.

COME ON HOME

Well, that's a long, long time ago;

But now and then in daily toil

When work around the shop is slow,

Up to the axles in the soil,

I wish some man I could discern

With strength and courage for such stunts—

I wish that somewhere I could turn

And yell, "Bring up the elephunts!"

## THE BULLFROG

The bullfrog he isn't some beautiful bird,  
But I notice a bullfrog will sing in the rain.  
When the swallow shuts up and no robin is heard  
Then the bullfrog keeps singing his cheery  
refrain,  
Just his merry ker-chunk—there, he's at it  
again!

Oh, the fair-weather bird sings a fair-weather song  
When the sun's in the east and the blue in the  
sky,  
But if only a rain-storm comes roaming along  
Then the fair-weather bird finds a hole that is  
dry  
And he hides him away till the clouds have  
rolled by.

But the bullfrog! Uh, uh! Does the bullfrog?  
Oh, no!  
No, he isn't a fair-weather friend, you can bet.  
For he knows we want song when the sky's drip-  
ping woe,  
So he sits on a log and keeps singing—and yet  
He could jump in the lake and get out of the wet.

## CHRISTMAS IN HEAVEN

Not only, surely, on the earth  
The bells of Christmas tell His birth—  
The joy of Christmas must be given  
To those who know the joy of heaven.

And so, I think, they gather 'round  
His throne to-night, and cymbals sound;  
For I have heard upon the air  
The Christmas laughter over there.

I think He does not care for praise,  
The splendor of His Christmas Days—  
No, for another, sweeter, reason,  
That heaven has its Christmas season.

For over there our little ones,  
Our lovely daughters, sturdy sons,  
In heaven itself would surely grieve  
Without their cherished Christmas Eve.

What great men's souls may walk the street  
Of heaven before the judgment seat,  
What aged saints what crowns may wear  
Of holy glory over there,

That street to-night another throng  
Has filled, and filled that street with song;  
I know on heaven's streets of white  
That Christmas night is children's night.

COME ON HOME

And, though a broken circle here  
Makes Christmas sad, and doubly dear,  
We know that Christ has not denied  
The little children at His side.

For sometimes when the night is long  
I think I hear a Christmas song,  
Yes, I have heard one special voice  
That made me hunger and rejoice.

To-night we need no Christmas tree;  
But up in heaven there must be  
Music and laughter, song and star—  
Christmas wherever children are.

COME ALONG, YOU SPRING

Come along, you Spring! Come along, you  
flow'rs!—

I've just been settin' right here for hours,  
I've just been waitin' for days and weeks  
Till a bud comes up and a robin speaks.

I have put my chair in the warmest spot  
When the sun was out (or the sun was not)  
And I've watched for Spring while the long hours  
pass—

Come along, you Spring! Come along, you grass!

I have set and longed for the days of Spring,  
For the buds and birds and for everything;  
I have set and hoped for a robin's call  
And the first green leaf on the viney wall.

Come along, you Spring, with the joys you've got!  
I will set right here till you're on the spot.  
Then I'll tilt my chair by the shanty door—  
When you *git* here, Spring—and I'll set some  
more!

COME HOME

Home's not a house, home is a heart  
To which you come at night;  
Home is a shrine, a thing apart,  
An altar lamp alight.  
The journey o'er, the long day through,  
Home is a heart awaiting you.

How low your roof I do not care,  
How high your ivied towers;  
If not a heart is waiting there  
That counts the weary hours,  
You are as homeless as the poor  
Who sleep unsheltered on the moor.

But if you have a hearth, a home,  
A chair, a glowing fire,  
A wife awaiting while you roam,  
And children for their sire,  
Let neither gold nor pleasure blind,  
Nor think a greater joy to find.

Come home, for home is always best,  
However loud the song;  
Come home, for home is tenderest,  
And right, and never wrong;  
Come home, for fear some foolish day  
You stay too long, and lose the way.



## A DIFFERENT WAY

Mothers have a way with them  
Different from others, lad:  
Love is every day with them,  
When you're merry, when you're sad.  
There is lots of other love  
That will come some happy day;  
But the love of mother-love  
Seems to love a different way.

Many, lad, the clever friend  
You will have in hours of dawn;  
But your great forever friend,  
When the other friends are gone,  
You will find is Mother, lad—  
You will never, what befall,  
Ever have another, lad,  
Like your mother, after all.

Put your arm around her, lad,  
She is hungry for your kiss;  
Not a friend you've found, my lad,  
Half as good a friend as this.  
There are fairer faces, lad—  
Yet this woman wan and gray  
God gave greater graces, lad,  
Only in a different way.

THE DISCARDED ROSE

Someone has thrown a rose away,  
And never asked her pardon,  
A rose that only yesterday  
Made glad some little garden—  
Someone has plucked a rose, and then  
Has thrown the rose away again.

Someone has thrown away a rose,  
Let drop with careless fingers,  
While yet with pink each petal glows  
And all her perfume lingers,  
While yet her perfect chalice holds  
The dew of morning in its folds.

Someone has thrown a happiness  
Aside, and never known it,  
That kings might envy to possess,  
Or millionaires to own it—  
Someone who had the glory of  
A baby's arms, a woman's love.

If life a rose has given you,  
A rose of love and laughter,  
God grant that you will hold it to  
Your heart forever after—  
God grant you never throw away  
The roses that you have today.

DISCIPLINE

I guess we ought to tan them more,  
The way our parents did, before  
These days of autos, jazz and sin  
Had put an end to discipline.  
I guess we ought to take them to  
The woodshed, like folks used to do.  
I guess we shouldn't let them go  
The way we do—but I don't know.

I guess we ought to get severe  
And take a youngster by the ear  
And march him out to that old shed  
And punish him the way I said.  
Perhaps he'd show us more respect,  
Perhaps his duties recollect  
And, when we told him so and so,  
Would do it then—but I don't know.

I know I got it when a kid  
For things I didn't and I did.  
And I suppose it made me good,  
Like people used to think it would.  
But, honest though, I can't recall  
I was much better, after all,  
Than youngsters now neglected so.  
Perhaps I was—but I don't know.

DON'T GROW AWAY

Don't grow away from things of old,  
From things of old too fast;  
So many change love's honest gold  
For coin that will not last.  
Perhaps you once were ragged clad,  
And now that rich you are;  
But from the things that once you had  
Don't grow away too far.

Don't grow away from older friends  
Because you have the new;  
A man has many when he spends,  
In poverty a few,  
And you may find, you yet may learn,  
The old are all that stay;  
You yet may long to them to turn—  
Don't grow too far away.

Whatever fortune may befall,  
Whatever friends you know,  
The dearest memory, after all,  
Is that of long ago.  
The time may come you long to roam  
To where the old things are,  
The simple tastes, the humble home—  
Don't grow away too far.

DREAMS OF LONG AGO

I'd rather see you in your frock,  
Your little gingham dress,  
Than all the satins in the block  
That others may possess;  
I'd rather see you setting out  
Your pansies in a row—  
For that was what I dreamed about,  
I dreamed of long ago.

I'd rather watch you while you set  
Our little supper here  
Than any dinner ever yet  
I ever had, my dear.  
I'd rather sit right here with you,  
We two together so;  
For that was—that was something, too,  
I dreamed of long ago.

I'd rather see you here at home,  
At home just you and me,  
Than any place that others roam  
In high society.  
We haven't done so very bad,  
Folks call us rich, I know—  
But all the fun we ever had  
I dreamed of long ago.

COME ON HOME

I'd rather do as we have done,  
When money came along:  
We didn't let it spoil our fun  
Or lead us into wrong.  
I'd rather hope, when life is o'er,  
To be together so  
In heaven—that was something more  
I dreamed of long ago.

EACH OTHER

Though we seek to gather gold,  
Loaded down with yellow honey,  
Thinking joy is something sold  
We can buy who have the money,  
As we near the final mile  
Then we always learn, my brother,  
All we have in life worth while  
Is each other.

Though we seek the world for friends,  
Though the universe we wander,  
Happiness begins and ends  
Here at home, not over yonder.  
Wife or husband, daughter, son,  
Mother, father, sister, brother—  
These our wealth, our only one,  
Just each other.

Not so long the life of man,  
Not so strong the fragile tether;  
Let us spend the time we can,  
All the time we can, together:  
Parted all the busy years,  
Till we meet to bury Mother—  
Shall we nothing have but tears  
For each other?

✓  
EMPTY BARRELS

A fellah with a load of barrels will take up most  
the road,  
And yet you'll find, if you will look, he hasn't got  
a load—

Although the pile is mighty tall,  
It all is empties, after all.

It rattles down the village street and makes a lot  
of din;  
To hear him anyone would think a show was  
comin' in.

To make a racket in the street  
A load of barrels can't be beat.

The man who always looks so wise, the man who  
never jokes,  
Who takes himself so serious in front of other folks,  
It very often will befall  
Is just an empty, after all.

The man who likes to argufy and talk both long  
and loud,  
The man opposin' ev'rything, may draw a little  
crowd—  
But they will find, the more he quarrels,  
It's just a load of empty barrels.



## EVOLUTION

I haven't read as much as some  
 Concernin' man, and where he's from.  
 So I ain't fixed, I calculate,  
 My own belief to demonstrate  
 For and ag'inst and pro and con  
 On evolution, and so on.

My good old mother and my dad  
 Was all the scientists I had;  
 And, as for books, they stuck to one  
 Regardin' how the world begun,  
 And, when I asked 'em that or this,  
 Referred me back to Genesis.

Well, maybe they was wrong about  
 The way creation started out;  
 But I don't recollect they spent  
 A lot of time in argument  
 Concernin' how the human race  
 First come to settle in the place.

To them what seemed to matter more  
 Was mostly where we're headed for,  
 Not what we was but what we'll be  
 In life and in eternity—  
 Not where we come from, me and you,  
 But rather where we're goin' to.

No matter where we started at,  
 If man or monkey, fish or bat,

COME ON HOME

We're here, it doesn't matter how.  
The most important question now  
Is how we read our title clear,  
And where we evolve from here.

FARTHER ON

Do not think of them all as dead,  
These the loved that we used to know;  
Every road has a bend ahead,  
Out of our sight awhile they go,  
Out of our sight around the bend—  
But we all shall meet at the journey's end.

Do not think of them, these who died,  
As dead and vanished and turned to clay:  
The load of life they have thrown aside,  
But their souls march up to the hills of day—  
We need but follow, who fall behind,  
A little longer our loved to find.

Do not think of them there at rest;  
Think of them rather as where they are:  
Across the mountains and farther west,  
Perhaps tonight on that very star;  
Do not think of them dead and gone—  
Think of them only as farther on.

## FATHERS CERTAINLY ARE FUNNY

Fathers are the funniest things!—  
 When a girl her fellow brings  
     Home with her, they're not like Mother:  
     She looks pleased. Somehow or other  
 Dad acts different from her:  
 Looks him over, calls him "sir,"  
     Very nearly scares your fellow  
     Red and white and green and yellow—  
 Shakes his hand, but wears a frown,  
 Looks him up and looks him down,  
     Acts as though he scented danger,  
     Like our bulldog with a stranger,  
 Hangs around the house or yard,  
 Seems to sort of keep on guard  
     Like his daughter was his money—  
     Fathers certainly are funny.

Fathers are the funniest things!—  
 When you're married, when the ring's  
     On your finger, when you're keeping  
     House, and come to Mother weeping  
 All about a little spat  
 You and Hubby have been at,  
     Mother always sympathizes;  
     But your father sort of sizes  
 Up the situation, then  
 Says, "Now you run home again,  
     Quit your crying, stop your fussing;  
     I don't blame the boy for cussing"—

COME ON HOME

Always takes the fellow's part!  
Hope to die and cross my heart,  
When your man you've married, honey,  
Fathers certainly are funny!

V A FATHER'S PRAYER

God, you have given me a son:

Now help me make him worthy of  
His father's name, his father's love;  
Among companions, make him one  
Both clean of heart and clean of speech;  
Help me my son these things to teach.

God, you have given me a boy:

Now help me still my boy to rear:  
Too kind to quarrel, brave to fear,  
Too good for any sinful joy,  
Or, if temptation prove too strong,  
Too wise to follow folly long.

God, you a son have given me:

Help me to make my boy a man,  
Help me to teach him all I can  
Of honesty and decency—  
Father of fathers, make me one,  
A fit example for a son.

FOR THE SAKE OF OTHER DAYS

Youth, they say, is forever gone:  
None of our yesterdays can last.  
Life is swift—we must hurry on,  
Think no more of the ended past.  
But we sit when the lights are low,  
Into the fading fire we gaze,  
Dreaming dreams of the long ago,  
Just for the sake of other days.

Church and Mother and Home and Dad,  
The grassy road and the village school,  
The simple pleasures that once we had,  
The silent woods and the quiet pool—  
Into the hearts of weary men  
Comes a vision of country ways,  
Leaving us fresh and clean again,  
Just for the sake of other days.

Life is swift—we must hurry on,  
Hurry on with the whirling stream;  
Another night, and another dawn  
Brings ambition and hope and scheme.  
Yet the things of the past abide,  
Something sweeter and better stays—  
And many from sin shall turn aside,  
Just for the sake of other days.

## THE GATES OF HEAVEN

Where shall we look for bliss?—

In worlds afar?

Worlds that are hid from this

Beyond a star?

Where shall we seek?—behind

Some rainbow's end?

Where shall we go to find

A friend?

Ever around our feet

The grasses grow,

Near to us, glad and sweet,

The lilies blow,

Here at our very door

The roses gleam,

While we go seeking for

A dream.

Heaven is just as far

As far we look.

Heavens around us are!—

Beside the brook,

Here in our garden, yes,

Our cottage in,

Highways to happiness

Begin.



COME ON HOME

Nearer than mortals think  
Our heaven lies—  
Never beyond the brink,  
Beyond the skies.  
Not through a sombre door  
Heaven awaits;  
Living, we stand before  
Its gates.

## GEE AND HAW

A fellah had a pair of mules  
That knew no laws and knew no rules  
But geed for haw and hawed for gee  
And went contrary gener'ly,  
The durnedest mules you ever see.

If both had geed when it was haw,  
While that ain't just exactly law,  
It might of worked out purty good,  
If once the thing was understood  
And they done what you thought they would.

But not these two. If old July,  
When you yelled "gee!" to gee would try,  
Then January, t'other one,  
Observin' what July had done,  
Would start to hawin' on the run.

So gee for haw and haw for gee,  
But never simultan'ously,  
They went through life, and kicked more dirt  
And done less work and done more hurt  
Than two hyenies, I assert.

And I've seen folks just like them mules:  
Got hitched, but never read the rules,  
Who didn't know you had to wear  
The marriage collar fair and square  
And pull together ev'rywhere.

COME ON HOME

One can't have haw and one have gee:  
On gee or haw you must agree  
And then go forward, gee or haw,  
Accordin'ly, without no jaw—  
And that's good sense and that's good law.

## COME ON HOME

### GOD'S GIFTS

If God will give you only this:  
In childhood hours a mother's kiss,  
And, after she has gone away,  
A thought of Mother ev'ry day,  
Though God should give you nothing more,  
How great your wealth, how rich your store!

If God will give in later life  
A loving comrade, patient wife,  
To share your joy and share your ill,  
A fond companion, come what will,  
Then God could give no greater gift  
Than hands to help and love to lift.

If God will give you but a boy  
To make your house a house of joy,  
If God will give you but a girl  
With golden heart and golden curl,  
Then God has made you richer far  
Than many other mortals are.

If God will give you sense to see  
The greatness of simplicity,  
The honest heart, the open mind,  
The joy that comes from being kind,  
Though other wealth He may withhold,  
Then God has given more than gold.

## COME ON HOME

### GOLD

I longed for gold, and gold I sought,  
And gold I found. With gold I bought  
More lands and mines I knew to hold  
New hopes of wealth, new dreams of gold—  
These hills of mine have had to be  
Wife, children, home and all to me.

The girl must be a lady now,  
The boy be twenty, anyhow.  
I send them all the cash they need  
To clothe, and educate, and feed,  
And buy them luxuries—and yet  
What is the gratitude I get?

A letter every week or so,  
Their mother makes them write, I know,  
On certain holidays their cards  
Inscribed, "To Father, with regards"—  
But no affection, not a line  
Of love from any child of mine.

There's scarce a thing they can't afford,  
And this their thanks, and my reward,  
For all the years I've worked and slaved,  
And schemed and bargained, fought and saved—  
And, now I'm weary, sick and old,  
It seems that all I have is gold.

## THE GOOD OLD OAK

In early Spring it was we moved up here.

That good old oak was just a mass of green,  
The way they are the springtime of the year—

And yet I guess that tree I never seen.  
I thought the oak was purty, that was all;  
And then the Summer come, and then the Fall.

The bright leaves fell, and then I saw the tree,  
Its giant strength by Autumn storms revealed;  
The bright leaves fell, but still it stood for me,  
When Winter come, a shelter and a shield.  
Yes, when the Autumn come at Summer's end,  
I found the tree a great and mighty friend.

That was the Fall we lost our little John,  
And had the fire, and crops was rather bad;  
But my good man he just kept workin' on,  
And held me closer when my heart was sad.  
Yes, when the sorrow come, and pain, and loss,  
My man was there to help me bear the cross.

I thought I knew my man in easy days  
When all went well, in days of joy and pride;  
But, oh, I knew him in a thousand ways  
I'd never guessed, the Fall our Johnny died.  
When 'round about me storms of Winter broke,  
I found beside me then a good old oak.

GOSSIP

"I've heard it said that someone said that someone said to him—

But as to who or when or where my memory is dim—

That somewhere else some other time—it's true as like as not—

Back east, out west, or somewhere—he a reputation got

For—well, for something that was wrong—I don't remember what.

"They say some fellow sued him—no, he sued some other man—

I don't know what it was about or how it all began—

But, anyway, some things came out that sounded pretty bad

Concerning him, concerning what he tried to do, or had—

If I had heard particulars to tell you I'd be glad.

"I'm not a man who likes to knock, or gossip to relate,

But I have heard that someone said he wasn't really straight.

I don't know what it was he did, or what the records show

COME ON HOME

When he was sued—or started suit—back somewhere long ago—

I don't know what they said he did—but probably it's so."



## GREAT-GRANDFATHER GREEN

Great-grandfather Green never heard, never seen,  
An airship, an auto, a talkin'-machine.  
He plowed with a plow and he hoed with a hoe,  
And planted potatoes by walkin' a row.  
For seedin', or thrashin', or breakin' the land,  
Great-grandfather Green done it mostly by hand.

He got up at daylight—saved daylight before  
The farmers got mad and the workers got sore.  
Eight hours was his workday—from sun until  
moon—

Eight hours after breakfast, and eight after noon.  
Yes, years before savin' of daylight we got,  
Great-granddad already had saved quite a lot.

On Sunday there wasn't no golf he could play:  
He just read the Bible and loafed it away.  
He played with the children, and talked of the  
crops,

And heard the old organ with numerous stops.  
Great-grandmother Green couldn't rag "Beulah  
Land,"

But Great-grandfather Green thought her playin'  
was grand.

Great-grandfather Green never had, never seen,  
A tractor, a 'phone, or a mowin'-machine;  
And yet he was happy—old letters I find  
That show him contented in body and mind.

COME ON HOME

Great-grandfather Green lived the regular way,  
Though he hadn't the things that are common  
today.

Great-grandfather Green has been gone many  
years.

The world is a different world, it appears.

I'm glad—for the world has got better, it has,

For people to live in, in spite of the jazz.

Great-grandfather Green had his fun, I allow—

But think how much *more* fun he *could* have had  
*now!*

## COME ON HOME

### HER GARDEN

So quietly she turned her head  
And to her watching mother said:  
    "The Summer must be getting near;  
The roses soon will blossom red—  
    I shall not see them, Mother dear.

"And yet, dear Mother, I am glad  
That every rose my garden had  
    Will come again when I can not.  
The world is never really sad;  
    The world blooms on, no matter what.

"I'd like to have you keep it so,  
My garden, as it used to grow.  
    I'm glad, although I shall be gone,  
The garden that I used to know  
    Will just go blooming on, and on—

"And if you love me, that is how  
To please me—keep it just as now;  
    For then the roses yet to be  
To all my friends will smile and bow,  
    And they will smile, and think of me."

HE'S GOT A GIRL

We used to think, his ma and me,  
How sort of jealous we would be  
When Sonny got along to where  
He had a girl—and now he's there.  
He never noticed them till now;  
And yet we knew sometime, somehow,  
A laffin' eye, a golden curl,  
Would set his boyish heart a-whirl,  
And then we'd know he had a girl.

Oh, yes, she might be sweet and good  
As any youngster ever could;  
We ain't a bit afraid of that,  
And that ain't what I'm drivin' at.  
But even in the second grade  
We always felt a bit afraid;  
We always felt afraid because  
We feared, like others mas and pas,  
He wouldn't be the boy he was.

And now it's happened—certain as  
The signs of Spring—we know it has.  
For now he parts and combs his hair,  
And asks for somethin' clean to wear,  
And trims his nails, and ties his tie,  
And shines his shoes—and we know why.  
When any boy unasked appears  
To wash his neck behind the ears,  
That's love—no matter what his years.

COME ON HOME

He's got a girl. And me, his dad,  
And Ma, we both are rather glad.  
We thought we'd hate to have our son  
To ever care for anyone  
Exceptin' us; but, dear me suz,  
As Mother says, we're glad he does.  
No jealous thoughts our hearts annoy,  
In fact it's added to our joy:  
My, how it has improved that boy!

## HIS AWKWARD WAY

He was rather awkward, he  
Wasn't so polite;  
He was wrong in company  
Oftener than right.  
His intentions, though, were good,  
People used to say,  
And he did the best he could,  
In his awkward way.

Many things he didn't know,  
Things you learn in school;  
People said he wasn't, though,  
Anybody's fool.  
He just used his common sense—  
He could even pray  
For the help of Providence,  
In his awkward way.

Though he wasn't very smart,  
Ev'rybody said,  
Still he had an honest heart,  
Had a level head.  
Never reckless, never rash,  
Saving day by day,  
That is how he got his cash,  
In his awkward way.

## COME ON HOME

Certain people used to smile,  
Thought him rather rough;  
But the children all the while  
Liked him well enough.  
Babies always went to him—  
He knew how to play,  
Understood each little whim,  
In his awkward way.

When the station agent died,  
Leaving not a thing,  
To the widow people tried  
Sympathy to bring.  
He could think of nothing then,  
Not a thing to say,  
But he made her take a ten,  
In his awkward way.

I don't know just what his creed,  
But I often heard  
'Twas religion of the deed  
Rather than the word.  
Heaven isn't for the sharp—  
I expect today  
He is playing on a harp,  
In his awkward way.

HIS HERITAGE

My son, you'll soon be leaving,  
As youngsters often do;  
Your mother will be grieving,  
Your dad will miss you, too.  
You'll never find a fonder  
Or better home than here,  
But youngsters like to wander  
The springtime of the year.  
Temptation will surround you  
To lead you into wrong;  
But, from the way I've found you,  
I know you'll get along.  
I know, somehow or other,  
Because you always had  
A whole lot of your mother,  
And a little of your dad.

A queer old world awaits you  
Out there beyond the hill,  
A world that loves you, hates you,  
That gives you good and ill.  
Be humble in your riches,  
Be glad without a cent;  
The roses in the ditches  
Bloom on, and are content.  
Though other men have money  
(And money helps a lot),  
You've got a fortune, Sonny,  
Some others haven't got:



COME ON HOME

You've got a wealth, another  
That ought to make you glad—  
A whole lot of your mother,  
And a little of your dad.

There's lots of mother in you—  
I've seen it day by day;  
Temptation will not win you  
Nor lead you far astray.  
In ev'ry tangled byway  
The mother will arise  
And help you find the highway—  
I see it in your eyes.  
And so I'll never worry,  
Wherever you may go,  
However you may hurry,  
Whatever you may know:  
A boy, somehow or other,  
Won't turn out very bad,  
With a whole lot of his mother—  
And a little of his dad.

## HIS MOTHER'S TEARS

The officers were putting on the train  
A boy of seventeen—and tears like rain  
Ran down his mother's cheeks. Had she for this  
Suffered upon the woman's bed of pain,  
Given her life, her labor, and her kiss?

For I remember hours of illness, when  
The weary nights, and then the days again,  
She kept her vigil, standing ever there  
Beside his bed, his surest medicine  
His mother's tenderness, his mother's pray'r.

No fear could ever drive her from his side;  
Though more were stricken and though many died,  
Though there was danger in his very breath,  
Her mother-love was bravely satisfied  
To stand on guard between her boy and death.

And through the years she taught as best she  
could  
That wrong is wrong, and naught can make it  
good—  
The simple truths that she herself had learned.  
And now they know around the neighborhood  
Not only Christ, his mother, too, he spurned.  
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COME ON HOME

He pays the price. I wonder, does he pay?  
My heart was aching as I turned away.

He pays a little, but his mother more—  
With dreams defeated, and with hairs of gray,  
And shame, yet yearning for the babe she bore.

I think if I were he, and prison-clad,  
Remembering the mother that I had,  
The hardest thing to face would not be years  
Behind the bars, the years however sad—  
But more the memory of my mother's tears.

HOME

The wide world narrows to a road,  
The wide road to a trail,  
The trail a path to your abode,  
Some cabin in the vale;  
The cabin narrows to a door,  
The little door is passed,  
Then comes the heart you've hungered for—  
And you are home, at last!

## THE HOME FAIRIES

You tip-toe gently to her bed,  
Where sleeps the little goldenhead,  
And smile yourself because a smile  
You find upon her lips the while:

"She dreams of angel, fairy, fay,  
I told her all about today.  
She thinks the fairies really true."  
Well, so do I—and so do you.

Yes, when a fairy garment gleams  
About her cradle in her dreams,  
And when in dreams a fay in white  
Stands guard above her all the night,

Think not that each is but a wraith  
Of simple hope and childish faith,  
Think not the fairies are not there—  
They stand about her ev'rywhere.

For these, the fairies, lean above  
Her crib tonight; sweet Mother Love  
And Father Care and Sister Good  
And strong and sturdy Brotherhood.

These are the fairies of the home  
That to the baby's cradle come  
And fill her dreams with such delight  
And ward and watch her all the night.

COME ON HOME

These are the fairies, I believe;  
And in each home and on each eve  
I pray they guard each little cot—  
God help the home where they do not.

## HOME ON CHRISTMAS DAY

I bet a king upon a throne  
Who looks around his court,  
Whatever army he may own  
Or wealth of any sort,  
Is never nearly half as proud  
As I was, in a way,  
When I beheld our little crowd  
At home on Christmas Day.

For yonder sat another queen,  
As good as any king's;  
You know the lady that I mean,  
Who wears no royal things,  
But has as faithful followers  
Her wishes to obey;  
God bless that retinue of hers  
At home on Christmas Day!—

A family of girls and boys,  
Just healthy boys and girls,  
No music theirs but happy noise,  
No gold but golden curls.  
But, Mr. King, you keep your throne!  
It may be fine—but, say,  
I wouldn't trade it for my own  
At home on Christmas Day!

COME ON HOME

My scepter is a carving-knife,  
A weapon tried and true,  
My house my castle, queen my wife,  
The kids our retinue.  
Each wants a leg, and not a wing,  
And so I carve away—  
But Mother she'll take "anything,"  
At home on Christmas Day.

It's over now another year,  
Our Christmas Day is o'er;  
But we're a little gladder here,  
And closer than before.  
I do not ask for riches, then—  
Lord, only this I pray:  
That we can have them all again  
At home on Christmas day.



## THE HOPELESS CASE

The babykin's nose is a pug, so they say;  
He hasn't a tooth, but he will have some day;  
So, mother, don't worry concerning the lad;  
He hasn't much hair, but as much as his dad.

The baby complains with occasional yells,  
Has moments of temper, and violent spells.  
But even his father, you'll have to admit,  
Will sometimes indulge in a similar fit.

The baby is nothing to worry about;  
Whatever his troubles, time figures them out;  
The pug will get better, the legs will get straight;  
The baby's all right, if you're willing to wait.

And so don't you worry, and so don't you fret;  
The older the baby the sweeter he'll get.  
Yes, time will correct ev'ry feature of his;  
But your husband will stay just about as he is.

## HORSESHOES

"Pitchin' horseshoes as we be  
Has its own philosophy  
Same as life," he says to me.  
"Not," says I to him, "its own—  
Every horseshoe ever thrown  
Somethin' like it I have known."

Then we started. He got one,  
And he says, "This sure is fun!"  
I says nothin'. Then I done  
Somethin' that I seldom do—  
Ringer and a leaner, too.  
More I got the worse he threw,  
Worse he threw the more he swore.  
Game stood seventeen to four.  
Him? He couldn't hit a door.

But at last he had some luck—  
Throwin' wild, the stake he struck;  
Shoe just wobbled, leaned and stuck.  
And you ought to hear him yell  
When I hit it and it fell,  
Givin' him a ringer. Well,  
Just to make the story short,  
My luck got the other sort,  
And he says, "Ain't this the sport?"

Settin' underneath a tree  
After he had walloped me,

COME ON HOME

"Now, here's my philosophy,"  
He remarked, "to never quit  
When your luck is off a bit,  
For you yet will conquer it."

"Maybe you are right," I said,  
"But, it seems to me, instead  
It's to shoot and keep your head.  
Luck will sometimes pull you through,  
Like it lately did for you,  
But, when luck goes up the flue,  
If you keep your temper sweet  
You can stand it to be beat,  
You can swallow your defeat.

"Some folks everything begin  
With a pray'r for strength to win.  
Well, that isn't any sin,  
But, to keep away the blues,  
Here's the pray'r that I would choose,  
'Give me strength, O Lord, to lose!'"

## HOW YOU FIXED?

"How you fixed, Dad? Pretty busy?"

When your youngster asks you that  
Then a father isn't, is he?

Drop your book and grab your hat!  
Lots of things may need attention,  
Lots of things your time employ,  
But the biggest you could mention  
Is your boy.

"How you fixed, Dad? Take a minute?"

Take it? I should say you can!  
Business may have millions in it—  
But it's more to make a man.  
Here's a chance to lay up treasure,  
Here's a chance to gather pelf,  
Chance to give a youngster pleasure—  
And yourself.

"How you fixed, Dad? Home for dinner?"

Yes, but only want a bite—  
Last night's game the boy was winner;  
Dad must get revenge tonight.  
Have it good and early, Mother;  
Son and I have lots to do—  
We will have to play another,  
Maybe two.

COME ON HOME

How you fixed, Dad? Lots of money,  
But a house that isn't glad?  
How are things with you and Sonny,  
How's the firm of Boy & Dad?  
Sometimes, making an inspection  
Of our wealth, we get it mixed;  
In the matter of affection  
How you fixed?

## HUSBANDS

I think no woman really knows  
The things her husband undergoes—  
The constant struggle day and night,  
The good and bad, the wrong and right,  
The endless battle he must fight.

While hers the lot of husbands' wives,  
He leads a multitude of lives—  
The train, the office, and the street,  
In victory and in defeat  
Temptation ev'rywhere to meet.

One tempts with pleasure, one with gold;  
Each day around him souls are sold:  
Are sold for riches, sold for ease,  
Or sold some baser sense to please—  
He meets all day such things as these.

While you, the sheltered and the warm,  
Know little gale or little storm,  
Or hidden sting, or thorny rose,  
Or shining stream that darkly flows,  
That meet him ev'rywhere he goes.

Oh, keep the cottage windows bright!—  
That man may find his way tonight.  
Such golden love your heart should hold  
That none may lure with glance or gold  
In that mad world where souls are sold.

## COME ON HOME

The loose of tongue and low of mind,  
The business sharper, he will find,  
The painted woman, gambler, cheat,  
Who set their traps in ev'ry street,  
Your love and kindness can defeat.

Home's not a table; home is more:  
A lighthouse on a stormy shore,  
An altar and an inner shrine  
That God has blessed and made divine,  
And you its priestess, love its sign.

Keep then the lamp of love ablaze  
To guide him up from darker ways,  
Till every tempter he has passed—  
Your strength so strong, your love so vast,  
You lead him home to God at last.

I COME BACK HOME

I come back home, and find the hills  
Still wrapped in wintry weather;  
The lingering snow the valley fills—  
And I had hoped for heather!  
But there beyond the snow and mire  
I see the twinkle of a fire.

I come back home; a fruitless quest  
Afar had made me wander;  
But now I know the world is best  
Right here, not over yonder.  
I see a cottage window glow,  
And now, and now I love it so!

I come back home—and home is there,  
Yes, home is there awaiting,  
And just as fond and just as fair,  
Its love as unabating;  
A good wife meets me at the door  
And children romp across the floor.

I come back home, a better man,  
A better husband, neighbor,  
A better member of my clan,  
With other men to labor.  
A mighty fortune God has sent—  
Has made me with my home content.



## IF A BIRD CAN SING

If a bird in a cage can sing, my dear,  
As though the days of the Spring were here,  
If a bird, forgetting the time o' year,

Can sing in a room that is dark and dim  
As though he sat on a greening limb,  
Yea, sing for those who imprison him,

If a bird, when all that he knew are gone  
To the lovely south or the crimson dawn,  
Can sit alone and can still sing on—

Surely then you and I can sing,  
Whatever shadows around us cling,  
Or what the moment may chance to bring,

Surely then you and I can be,  
Though bound in body, in spirit free,  
Can sing a little as well as he.

For few shall find what they most desire;  
We are all shut in with our strands of wire,  
Till hearts grow heavy and bodies tire;

We may not labor at what we dream:  
But the whistling boy has the willing team,  
And a little song makes a shorter seam.

COME ON HOME

We lose some loves as we pass along:  
There are some go far, there are some go wrong;  
But still there is joy enough for song.

No night so dark but the dawn is near—  
Oh, we can find some thought to cheer  
If a bird in a cage can sing, my dear!

## IF I COULD MAKE A FRIEND

If I could make a friend today  
I would not ask for greater store;  
If just one soul would come and say,  
"We shall be comrades evermore,"  
I would not need to count my gold  
Tonight when all my labors end—  
My heart a greater wealth would hold  
If I could say, "I made a friend."

If I could have a friend tonight  
I did not have at this day's dawn,  
One hand that held my fingers tight,  
One breast that I could lean upon,  
I would not need to calculate  
How much my profit, much my trade,  
My gain today to estimate,  
If I could say, "A friend I made."

If I today a friend could find  
Amid the labor and the stress,  
Some toiling brother, kindred mind,  
Some hand to clasp in tenderness,  
It would not matter what reward  
The hours had brought me on the way,  
If I could say, "I thank Thee, Lord—  
I know I made a friend today."

## IF I SHOULD CARVE A LINCOLN

If I should carve a Lincoln, I would take  
 No snow-white marble, but a rugged rock,  
 One that the frosts of Winter could not break,  
 That had withstood the ocean's thundering shock,  
 Some solid rock amid the shifting sands,  
 Unmoved by storm, unaltered by the wave,  
 Some granite giant that forever stands  
 To mark the harbor with a light to save.

If I should carve a Lincoln, I would shape  
 Some promontory lifting from the sea,  
 Standing as Lincoln stood, a mighty cape  
 Thrust forward into time a century,  
 Looking, as Lincoln looked, beyond the shore,  
 Across the ocean of the future years,  
 A rock to stand for men forevermore  
 And point the way to other pioneers.

If I should carve a Lincoln, I would form  
 A figure from a rock that loved the sun,  
 A rock that glistened after every storm  
 And smiled with verdure when the rain was done,  
 A rock where little children came to play  
 And violets to blossom on the slope,  
 That found, like Lincoln, humor in each day,  
 In words of humor finding words of hope.

COME ON HOME

If you would carve a Lincoln, such a stone

You will require, O sculptor, for your art,  
Some stone gigantic standing thus alone,

High as his mind, and broad as Lincoln's heart.

We may not hope to shape with human hands

A fit memorial for such as he—

Leave Time to carve it from some rock that stands,

Some new Gibraltar, by our western sea.

THE INARTICULATE

Hand in hand, with swinging pails,  
The milkmaid and her swain,  
Listening to the nightingales,  
Come along the lane.  
Few the things they think to say  
As the day departs—  
But the wild-bird sings his way  
Straight into their hearts.

Yonder west the sunset dies,  
All its wealth of gold  
Yellowing both earth and skies,  
More than skies can hold.  
Naught he says, nor she to him,  
Inarticulate—  
But they hear the cherubim  
Sing at heaven's gate.

In the east now Luna sweet  
Shows her lovely face,  
And the earth and heaven meet  
In the old embrace.  
Just two children of the land  
Down among the farms—  
But in wordless joy they stand  
In each other's arms.

## INSURED

When I come home at close of day  
 I like to watch the children play.  
 Whatever load I have to bear,  
 There is abundant payment there  
     For all my labor. 'Tis to hear  
 The laugh of children, 'tis to know,  
 What night may come, what winds may blow,  
     The little children need not fear.

When I come home, my labor o'er,  
 I like to pause outside the door  
 Before I enter, hear the hymn  
 The good-wife hums. Cathedrals dim  
     Have never heard as sweet an air  
 As sings the good-wife setting food  
 Upon the table for her brood,  
     Secure from want and safe from care.

When I come home—but fathers' eyes  
 Must look beyond the sunlit skies.  
 When I come home I want to know,  
 What night may come, what winds may blow,  
     They are protected. Dawn or gloam,  
 I want to know that, come what will,  
 The wife and child are sheltered still,  
     If I some night should not come home.

## THE INVADERS

Through dim, mysterious, darkened halls  
Their shadows creep along the walls;  
Their creaking footsteps on the stair  
Give warning they are everywhere;  
No barrier can long endure,  
No latch is safe, no door secure;  
However you may try to hide,  
They'll search and find you, far and wide,  
And burst upon you with a shout—  
You cannot keep the children out.

Put up the book, lay down the pen:  
The young invaders come again  
To storm your study, climb your knee,  
However busy you may be,  
However busy think you are—  
The young invaders from afar  
Have other things for you to do  
That really are important, too,  
Some fun you ought to be about—  
You cannot keep the children out.

And if it be a door you close,  
That slowly opens to a nose,  
And then an eye, and then a head,  
And then a child, as I have said—  
Or if it be your heart you try  
To shut with little children by,



COME ON HOME

Yes, if you try to shut its door,  
Love laughs at locksmiths evermore,  
And children's love the most, no doubt—  
You cannot keep the children out.

Though other men we learn to hate,  
Shut in our soul, and lock our gate,  
Before the children's merry call  
The walls of Jericho shall fall.  
Though heaven may seem shut to us,  
Perhaps we shall attain it thus:  
Perhaps a baby's lisping pray'r  
Shall swing the portals for us there,  
And God forgive our hate and doubt—  
You cannot keep the children out.

## I SAW A BLIND MAN

I saw a blind man with his cane,  
 A crippled blind man chanced to meet,  
 Finding a pathway for his feet  
 Through a great city's narrow lane  
 Of heaped-up stone. Amid the roar  
 I saw a blind man groping for  
 A passage through the dust and heat  
 And danger of a city street.

The thrill of traffic, hum of trade,  
 The throb of all our industry,  
 Meant naught to him. To you and me  
 The city mighty music made;  
 To him it meant a weary way  
 Of darkness even in the day,  
 A city of uncertainty,  
 A great unseen, uncharted sea.

I saw a blind man with his cane,  
 I saw him hesitating by,  
 Tapping his way—and here am I  
 Who see and hear, and yet complain.  
 Yes, here am I, who see and know  
 Each hour I live, each step I go.  
 I shall not murmur, God, again—  
 I saw a blind man with his cane.

IT DON'T TAKE MUCH

It don't take much to make men glad,  
To cheer folks up when folks git sad.  
When crops look poor, and things go wrong,  
It don't take much, it don't take long,  
Whoever any fellah is,  
To slip your arm inside of his  
And let him know a friend he's got  
Who's still a friend, no matter what.  
He'll chirk right up at just a touch  
Of friendliness—it don't take much.

It don't take much to make men smile—  
Why, folks just want to all the while!  
And all they need to make 'em start  
Is just to meet one merry heart  
Who, when it rains, just spins a yarn  
And doesn't give a good gosh darn!  
Folks like to laff, they like to grin—  
They likely will if you begin!  
When Gloom has got 'em in his clutch  
Just make 'em smile!—it don't take much.

It don't take much to set men right:  
One candle's bigger than the night  
If someone sees it who's astray  
And finds the right and proper way.  
You don't need scold, you don't need preach,  
Just all you need to do is reach

COME ON HOME

Your hand and find some fellah's hand  
And help him back to solid land.  
A friendly hand, a kindly touch,  
That's all they need—it don't take much.

COME ON HOME

IT IS THE FLAG

Sail some foreign sea,  
Tread some foreign land,  
Far from your America—  
Then you'll understand.  
Homeward bound again,  
With the harbor nigh,  
You will see a banner fair  
Up against the sky.

Just the stripes of white,  
Just the stripes of red,  
Just a square of starry blue  
Waving overhead;  
Humble it may be:  
It may be a rag  
Torn to tatters by the wind—  
But it is the Flag!

You who never thought,  
You who never saw,  
You who passed with careless tread,  
Heedless of the law,  
You will feel a thrill,  
Exaltation new,  
Looking on your standard there,  
Red and White and Blue.

COME ON HOME

Safe within its folds  
Are the truly free,  
Held within its mighty arms  
All your liberty.  
With a mist of tears,  
With uncovered head,  
You will greet it evermore,  
Blue and white and red.

Sail some foreign sea,  
Tread some foreign land,  
Far from your America—  
Then you'll understand.  
Humble it may be:  
It may be a rag  
Torn to tatters by the wind—  
But it is the Flag!

IT MUST BE YEARS

It must be years and years ago,  
When things were cheap, and we had snow—  
It must be forty, I suppose—  
When men wore whiskers, women clo'es,  
And So-and-So knew So-and-So  
(Now no one no one ever knows).

Why, I remember sirloin steak  
Ten cents a pound. You didn't make  
A lot of money, maybe, no—  
But, gosh, you didn't need it so;  
Not very much it used to take—  
But that was years and years ago.

It must be—I remember when  
Folks went to church, yes, even men;  
Believed the Bible. Backslid? Oh,  
Some fellahs sometimes did, I know,  
But got religion back again  
As soon as they was feelin' low.

What was it I was goin' to say  
About the things of yesterday?  
Well honest, neighbor, I don't know:  
When I git reminiscin' so  
I sort of wander far away  
Along the path of long ago.

COME ON HOME

And when you git as old as me  
Then just as fair a memory  
    These days will seem to you, I know:  
    I guess it always will be so;  
For life to look its best to be  
    It must be years and years ago.



JUST DAD

"There's someone in the lower hall;  
See who it is." "Just Dad, that's all."  
Just Dad returning to his door,  
His labor done, the long day o'er,  
His back perhaps a little bent,  
His body weary, yet content,  
His step perhaps a little slow,  
And yet how glad to see the glow  
Stream out across the evening gloam!—  
Just Dad, that's all, just coming home.

The food is on the table, bright  
The living-room with yellow light.  
The furnace sends its pleasant heat  
And bids the wintertime retreat.  
Outside the dark, outside the storm,  
But all within is snug and warm.  
The roof is strong, the wall secure,  
And peace and joy and comfort sure.  
"There's someone in the lower hall;  
See who it is." "Just Dad, that's all."

JUST STARTING OUT

And so you're married—keepin' house!

Well, well, well, well—and so it goes.

You wasn't bigger than a mouse

Just yesterday, it seems. It shows

The years are surely slippin' by.

And so you're married. Me, oh, my!

Well, young folks just a-startin' out

Have surely got a splendid chance

To know just what they're both about,

To plan and figger in advance;

And that's the secret, too, I guess,

Of most of married happiness.

Just startin' out, you say. Well, here

Is where they make or break, my friend.

How much you goin' to get this year?

How much can you afford to spend?

Know where you are, and how you stand,

And figger out just where you'll land.

Oh, love—yes, love, that's needed, too.

I hope you're both in love so deep

It makes you dizzy, thrills you through—

And yet I've found, in love to keep,

There's nothin' like a little sense

Regardin' income and expense.

COME ON HOME

No ship starts out upon a trip  
Without a course, without a plan,  
That ain't the way to sail a ship,  
Or sail a woman and a man.  
Find out just what you can afford,  
And stick to that, so help us, Lord!

And, if you do, I tell you what  
I think will happen: Every year  
You'll find a little more you've got  
Of money, comfort, love and cheer—  
You'll be as free of care and doubt  
As two young folks just startin' out.

JUST THE AGE

You're just the age when all around,  
My girl, new dangers will be found,  
You're just the age when happy youth  
Needs loving counsel, simple truth,  
When all around you every day  
New paths and strange paths lead away—  
A greater time than any other,  
You're just the age you need your mother.

A father may be good and kind,  
Yet women see when men are blind;  
Though friends advise, and friends attend,  
How shall you know which friend is friend?  
Though others try the way to show,  
Your mother walked it long ago.  
Yes, friend or father, chum or brother,  
You're just the age you need your mother.

Remember, will you? All along  
You knew the right, and knew the wrong,  
And knew the foolish from the wise—  
But now there's something in your eyes,  
The way you look, the way you speak,  
The way the color tints your cheek,  
That seems to say, somehow or other,  
You're just the age you need your mother.

## KEEP EACH OTHER YOUNG

The wife and I have kept our youth and kept it  
pretty well,

But just how long, the honest truth I don't intend  
to tell.

We've had a lot of babies, yes, and had a lot of  
bother,

As ev'ryone must have, I guess, a mother and a  
father.

But she has kept the wrinkles out and kept the  
roses in,

And, though I've lost some hair, no doubt, it isn't  
very thin.

And here is how we got along, we managed, me  
and Mother:

If joy or pain, or sob or song, we shared it with  
each other.

For younger you will never keep, when older you  
have grown,

If day by day you work and weep and worry on  
alone.

It isn't trouble makes us old, it isn't stormy  
weather—

It's hearts a-sunder growing cold, not keeping  
warm together.

I sometimes think the rainy day, the doctor bills,  
the debt,

Instead of turning us to gray have made us  
younger yet;

COME ON HOME

The rocks and reefs of life among, we've passed  
'em, me and Mother—

The way that we have kept so young is keeping  
young each other.

## THE LATCH UPON THE GATE

The little hurts of childhood seem such little hurts  
to us—

Such foolish things to cry about, such silly things  
to fuss.

We often smile at children's tears, alas, we often  
frown—

I wish that from our eminence we elders could  
get down,

Get down and walk the children's world where  
little things are great,

Down where you have to climb to reach the latch  
upon the gate.

The little hurts of childhood seem such little hurts  
to men;

That must be why we sear their souls with anger  
now and then.

When years have hardened us to ill we oftentimes  
forget

That plastic as creation's clay are all the children  
yet.

If we would find the children's hearts and lead the  
children straight

We must get down and climb to reach the latch  
upon the gate.

## THE LEGACY

What are you doing for girl and boy  
To make their future a thing of joy?  
What is your dream, your hope, your plan,  
For waking woman and coming man?—

A wealth of money, a life of play,  
To give them pleasure from day to day?  
Enough that neither may need to toil,  
Nor feel the touch of the common soil?

Or is your dream of a greater wealth,  
The soul's well-being, the body's health?—  
Not hands too dainty nor heart too proud  
To lift and labor amid the crowd?

Oh, some inherit from lowly sire  
Simple pleasures and plain attire,  
Hours of labor their bread to bring—  
And yet is that such a dreadful thing?

Leave them wealth in a golden store,  
If wealth you have, but leave them more:  
The well-trained heart and the well-trained  
hand—  
These are better than gold or land.

This is the richest legacy  
To leave the children for years to be:  
The wealth that all of your wealth survives—  
Busy, useful, and happy lives.



## THE LITTLE GARDEN

Three rows of peas and three of beans,  
Four hills, perhaps, of corn,  
And maybe you don't think it means  
So much—but every morn  
They hurry out to see if night  
Has brought another seed to light.

This row of radishes, the row  
Of berry bushes, too,  
Have something more to make them grow  
Than all your acres do.  
They all have rain, and sun above,  
But these have more, for these have love.

The little gardens near the street,  
Amid the city din,  
Have always seemed to me the sweet,  
The best to labor in,  
When every tendril, every vine,  
Around our happy hearts entwine.

For where love plants, there love will reap,  
And reap a thousandfold;  
And so a little garden keep  
And watch its joy unfold.  
With love to 'tend, and turn the loam,  
Who makes a garden makes a home.

## THE LITTLE HOUSE OF LONG AGO

The little house of long ago  
 It wasn't very much, I know;  
 But Father stirred the April ground  
 And planted zinnias around,  
 And nights and Sundays trimmed the hedge,  
 And put white stones along the edge  
 Of every path, and trained the vine  
 Upon the fence with bits of twine,  
 And built an arbor and a seat  
 Where often neighbors used to meet,  
 And made a trellis at the side  
 A crimson Rambler glorified—  
 Yes, tinkered here and 'tended there  
 With busy hands and gentle care,  
 And all because he loved it so,  
 The little house of long ago.

The little house of long ago  
 It wasn't very much for show;  
 But Mother curtained it with chintz,  
 And from the window rosy prints  
 All day a merry welcome smiled  
 To friend and stranger, man and child;  
 And Mother hung upon the walls  
 The pictures memory recalls,  
 The old engravings of the days  
 Of simple tastes and simple ways.  
 How white her linen, and how bright  
 Her plated silver! With delight

## COME ON HOME

She cooked and mended, dusted, swept,  
And so her little cottage kept  
And made a home with love aglow,  
The little house of long ago.

The little house of long ago  
Was different from this, I know;  
But often, when the boy complains  
About the car, or girl maintains  
We really haven't half as much  
As So-and-So of such-and-such,  
I wish that they could start again  
The road of life I started then,  
I wish that they might know, might see,  
Might live the life that used to be,  
Might learn the joy of quilts and shelves  
And other things we make ourselves—  
I wish that they could spend a while  
Away from luxury and style,  
I wish that they could see, could know,  
The little house of long ago.

## THE LITTLE MISSIONARY

A little bit of baby in a little bit of cot:  
Why, it isn't bigger, maybe, than—it doesn't  
matter what,  
Bigger, maybe, than a minute, bigger, maybe,  
than a mouse;  
But that cot has wonders in it—there's a baby  
in the house!

For that house forever after is another sort of  
place:  
There's a whole lot more of laughter, there's a  
little more of grace;  
Though we number two or seven, there's a whole  
lot more of mirth,  
There's a little more of heaven, there's a little  
less of earth.

There's a little more of hurry, when you have a  
baby there,  
There's a little more of worry and a little more  
of care;  
There's a little more attendance on the truths of  
long ago,  
There's a little more dependence on the God we  
used to know.

For there's this about a baby, and a house with  
babies in:

Oh, we often wander, maybe, into idleness and sin;

COME ON HOME

But there comes a little fairy tripping lightly o'er  
the sod,  
Just a little missionary who will lead us back to  
God.

## THE LITTLE THINGS AROUND THE HOUSE

The little things around the house are what will  
hurt the most

When someone goes beyond the sky to join the  
heavenly host.

Her pen or book or plate or cup—we did not  
think that such

A simple thing she knew in life in death could  
mean so much.

Not yonder there amid the stones of granite is  
her tomb;

It lies within this very house, within her very room.  
There stands the bed in which she slept, the chair  
in which she sat,

Her little dress—God, how the heart will leap at  
sight of that!

We'll lay the little dress away, she will not need  
it more;

She has a fairer garb to wear upon a fairer shore.  
Another in her room will dwell and use her bed and  
chair;

But always when we look within we'll see some  
memory there.

And time will make us glad to have the things  
she used to know,

For each will bring some tender thought of her of  
long ago.

COME ON HOME

When someone far beyond the years is with the  
heavenly host

The little things around the house are what will  
help the most.

## COME ON HOME

### LONG PANTS

You never think about it much,  
About the boy who's growing so,  
Who proudly tells you he can touch  
The attic ceiling where it's low;  
Of course you've noticed he is tall  
And handy now at doing things  
He didn't used to do at all—

But something else the knowledge brings  
That makes you realize at last  
His boyhood days are nearly past.

He wants long pants. Straight home from school  
He comes to you, his face alight;  
The game of ball, the swimming-pool,  
No magic have for him tonight;  
A greater dream is in his mind,  
A greater hope is in his heart—  
And then, all suddenly, you find  
Your boy from boyhood longs to part,  
To follow life's eternal plan  
And take the stature of a man.

Time like a quiet river runs  
And bears us onward with its flow:  
Our babes, our boys, and then our sons,  
Are growing faster than we know.  
We had forgotten: it had seemed  
The last lamb always would be ours;  
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COME ON HOME

But now the boy the dream has dreamed

That comes to buds, and makes them flow'rs.

The babe was sweet, the boy was dear;

But, Mother, now the son is here.

LOVE'S SEASONS

I kissed her when we strolled the field,  
The meadowlands of May,  
When kiss and laughter both concealed  
The things we dared not say—  
I kissed her in the Spring of life  
Before I thought of house or wife.

I kissed her in the heat of June  
When ev'ry rose was red,  
When hearts beat, oh, so wild a tune!  
By youth's mad music led—  
I kissed her when she dared to turn  
Her eyes to mine and let them burn.

I kissed her in the Summer night,  
The night of stars and flow'rs,  
When peace and joy and calm delight  
And comradeship were ours,  
When comradeship had come to bless,  
Desire had turned to tenderness.

I kissed her when her cheeks ran rain,  
When sorrow overflowed,  
And saw the sun come forth again,  
The roses to the road—  
And loveliest of all appears  
The time I kissed away her tears.

MAN'S HARBOR

A ship must have harbor, a bird must have nest,  
Or what were the use of the cruise or the quest?  
Oh, that is their dream on the wing, o'er the foam—  
Some headland a haven, some maple a home!

A path must have gate and a journey have end,  
Each footstep must lead to the house of a friend.  
Oh, what were the use of the laurel we wear  
With no one to know it and no one to care?

So say not that you are but little in life,  
For this is man's harbor—the heart of his wife.  
No loss can discourage, defeat never grieves,  
With that inspiration—a wife who believes.

THE MAN YOUR BOY WILL BE

You sometimes worry, wonder what  
Your boy will be a man;  
You like to look ahead a lot,  
The future try to scan.  
You hope he'll be a man in fact  
As well as man in size,  
And so his every boyish act  
You watch with anxious eyes.

But do not worry—you can tell  
The man your boy will be,  
If he the truth will follow well  
You try to make him see;  
You need not watch his nights and days  
In search of guilt or guile—  
You only need to turn your gaze  
Upon yourself awhile.

There is the place for men to look,  
For fathers to inquire;  
Sons do not learn life from a book,  
They learn it from their sire.  
The rule you make your boy obey  
Must be the rule for you—  
The boy will heed the thing you say,  
But more the thing you do.

COME ON HOME

It is not difficult to know  
The future of the lad,  
For he will very likely grow  
Exactly like his dad.  
The life he leads as time unfolds,  
When boyhood days are fled,  
Will be the life he now beholds—  
The life his father led.

THE MORE THE YEARS

The more the years the more we all remember  
Our yesterdays, the things that used to be;  
The summertime seems fairer in December,  
And roses fade, but not from memory.  
Youth has so much, and thinks how empty age is,  
With only dreams of things of long ago;  
But we who sit and turn life's lovely pages,  
What joy we know!

The more the years the more our sorrows soften,  
The more the years the more they turn to gold;  
Yes, life's a tale, though told however often,  
That fairer grows with ev'ry time it's told.  
Youth has today, and youth is young and clever,  
Age only yesterdays of smiles and tears;  
And yet the past grows lovelier forever,  
The more the years.

# MOTHER NEVER SEEMS TO CARE

Sister thinks we need some things  
 Father says we can't afford,  
 For discussion always brings  
 Something to the family board:  
 Other people have so much  
 That we never have at all—  
 They use taxicabs and such  
 When they go to shop or call.  
 But if Father lays away  
 Of his salary a share  
 For, perhaps, a rainy day,  
 Mother never seems to care.

Brother thinks the town is slow,  
 Hasn't any life or snap—  
 Really people never know  
 Such a town is on the map.  
 Boys grow up and stick to dad,  
 Girls grow up and wed the boys,  
 All the fun they ever had  
 Just the old domestic joys.  
 But if girls are good and pure,  
 If the boys are clean and square,  
 Though the town is slow for sure,  
 Mother never seems to care.

I have noticed that a lot,  
 Looking over humankind:  
 If they're rich or poor or what,  
 Mothers never seem to mind.

COME ON HOME

If they have to worry, work,  
Save and figure, make and mend,  
Mothers never seem to shirk—  
They are mothers to the end.  
If their children love, obey,  
Grow to men and women fair,  
Though they're often bent and gray,  
Mothers never seem to care.



## THE NEW PREACHER

Seemed like the preacher wa'n't good enough;  
Seemed like the parson wa'n't up to snuff.  
He had queer notions and old-fashioned ways,  
That once was very well in other days—  
Just like a horse and buggy used to do  
Before we got the car, and tractor, too—  
But people now don't think the way they done,  
And what was wicked once is only fun;  
And so we thought he ought to take a hike,  
Seemed like.

Seemed like the young folks didn't go to church  
The way they ought. Dad used to use the birch  
On us to git us up for Sunday school,  
(But there's another thing; birch ain't the rule  
No more. You tell your children what to do;  
But, if they don't, your duty then is through.)  
And so, to sort of git the young folks back,  
We needed what our preacher seemed to lack—  
A little faster gait to sort of strike,  
Seemed like.

Seemed like we ought to call this other man.  
Now things are boomin' on the modern plan.  
There's somethin' doin' nearly every night,  
Except on pray'r night—then it's rather light.  
The sermons, too, are strickly up to date,  
Discussin' questions that are new and late.

## COME ON HOME

But, somehow, though, you know, us older folks,  
In spite of all the eloquence and jokes,  
Git sort of thirsty on life's dusty pike,  
Seems like.

Seems like the livin' waters do not flow  
The way they used to in the long ago.  
Seems like when you yourself are gittin' old,  
And thinkin' more and more of streets of gold,  
That half the consolation you don't git,  
In spite of all the younger preacher's wit.  
Seems like, for old folks gittin' near the sod,  
That now and then he ought to mention God—  
For that would sort of help us on the hike,  
Seems like.

## THE NIGHT MA HEARD THE BURGLAR

The night Ma heard the burgaler we're not so likely to forget.

At three she says it wakened her (Pa says it wasn't midnight yet);

But anyway Ma heard a noise, Ma heard a burgaler as plain.

Pa said, "Go on, it's only boys," and tried to go to sleep again.

Ma made us children put on clo'es and then get underneath the bed;

She said to Pa, "I don't suppose that you'll get up until we're dead."

Pa said, "I never heard a thing, what's more I don't hear nothin' now."

Ma said, "Get up; the lantern bring; because I heard one, anyhow."

Pa just rolled over. Ma got mad. She said, "I guess you're just afraid."

That surely got a rise from Dad. Inside his clo'es a jump he made

And grabbed his gun and started. "No," then Mother yelled, "stay here! No, sir!—

I ain't a-goin' to let you go get shot by any burgaler!"

COME ON HOME

But Pa ran down, threw wide the door; outside he  
never heard a sound;  
And so the back he started for, and then, just as  
he got around,  
He *saw*—well, then we heard him shoot, shoot  
seven times, or eight, or nine,  
Right through his go-to-meetin' suit that Ma had  
left out on the line.

ONE DEAD, TWO MARRIED,  
ONE AWAY

One dead, two married, one away—  
So Mother often counts them o'er;  
One gone, two mated, one astray—  
And that the story of the four,  
The sons and daughters that she bore.

Each day she goes about her tasks,  
As each new task in turn appears,  
And naught complains, and little asks,  
And smiles a little through her tears,  
And quietly lives out her years.

But, oh, if I were that one dead,  
I would come often to her side,  
I would stand often by her bed  
And tell her I had never died,  
And leave her faith re-satisfied.

And were I son or daughter now  
With sons and daughters of my own,  
When bent her form, and gray her brow,  
I would not leave her long alone,  
My words unsaid, my love unknown.

And if I were that other one,  
The thoughtless, careless wanderer,  
Today would find my journey done,  
This very night a traveler  
Would hurry home to home and her.

THE ONLY BOND

It will not be the wealth you bring her  
Will make her glad, but only this:  
A bit of happy song you sing her,  
A circling arm, a husband's kiss.  
It will not be the house, the raiment,  
That make her merry, fill her life:  
These never were sufficient payment  
For a wife.

But if the old love never falters  
And never wearies, never fails,  
However much your fortune alters  
She has her singing nightingales.  
Blue skies she has behind the thunder  
And peace is hers amid the strife—  
That is the glory and the wonder  
Of a wife.

Work well, and may it bring her riches,  
But not neglect to make her doubt;  
For she would rather walk the ditches  
With love, than avenues without.  
For, what the fortune, what the weather,  
Love, after all, is all of life—  
The only bond to hold together  
Man and wife.

OUR DAILY BREAD

With mother here and father there  
The baby knelt to say her pray'r,  
The little pray'r we all have learned,  
And some forgotten, some have spurned:  
"Our Father," in the usual way,  
"Thy kingdom come," we heard her say,  
"Thy will be done"—each mortal knows  
The holy pray'r, and how it goes.  
"Give us this day our daily bread,"  
And then she lifted up her head,  
"But put some butter on," she said.

"No, no!" we cried, and then we smiled,  
And then we knew again a child  
Had spoken truth; we smiled, and then  
Out of the mouths of babes again  
We knew had come a living truth,  
The sweet philosophy of youth.  
Father, we want to do Thy will,  
And do our work—but long the hill,  
The hill of life that lifts ahead;  
Oh, Father, as the babe has said,  
Give us some butter on our bread.

The dignity of labor, yes,  
We know all that; but duties press  
Upon the heart: the daily round,  
Accustomed scene, accustomed sound.

## COME ON HOME

Though noble tasks our hours employ,  
Father, we want a little joy;  
Yes, there is something more to give:  
To live mankind must more than live.  
A roof, a fire, a meal, a bed,  
Are not enough. As baby said,  
Give us some butter on our bread.



## COME ON HOME

### OUR OWN

We are so careful of our speech  
When strangers listen, lest we say  
Some word unkind. Our lips we teach  
To guard themselves by night and day,  
For fear some careless, thoughtless word  
May by the passing throng be heard.

But with our own!—wife, brother, friend,  
Or husband, sister, mother, sire—  
Words that old friendship may offend,  
That burn the heart of love like fire,  
We sow like thistles ev'rywhere,  
And kill life's roses with the tare.

Yet how important words of ours  
To those who love us!—ev'ry phrase  
Makes life's hard highway bloom with flow'rs  
Or drifts the snow across their ways;  
We make their Summer, make their Spring,  
Their Winter, Autumn—ev'rything.

The passing stranger may not hear,  
Or stranger hearing may not heed,  
But when your word cuts someone near  
For endless days a heart may bleed—  
How many know the torture of  
The knife that stabs, in hands they love.

COME ON HOME

Love gives no license, friendship right,  
To hurt because they love us so,  
But greater duty, more delight,  
To guard from wounds the ones we know—  
Kind not to travelers alone,  
But in our house, and to our own.

OVER THERE

When I was young I used to wonder  
    When they are old how people know?  
And now the ones I loved lie under  
    The Summer rain, the Winter snow.  
The way of life is marked with crosses,  
    Each little journey has its mound;  
We know our ages by our losses,  
    Not wealth nor wisdom we have found.

Yes, one by one the loved ones leave us,  
    Some sombre hour some soul departs;  
Yes, one by one our sorrows grieve us,  
    Engrave their record on our hearts.  
When are we old? Oh, when we wander  
    The way alone, with no one near!—  
When those we love are over yonder,  
    More over there than over here.

Yet, sturdy sons and lovely daughters,  
    Sweet wife, dear husband, honored friend,  
We, too, must pass beyond the waters,  
    Must journey to the journey's end.  
And, when the moment comes for going,  
    We shall not weep, we shall not care—  
We shall be glad to follow, knowing  
    You all are waiting over there.

PASSING THROUGH

Lynn Sumner called me up today.  
I said, "How long you going to stay?"  
He said, "I'm leaving right away,  
    Inside an hour or two."  
I said, "Of course, you're coming out?"  
"Well that," he said, "I greatly doubt;  
I've got some things to see about—  
    I'm only passing through.

"But, say, on second thought," he said,  
"I haven't anything ahead  
As necessary as to tread  
    The threshold of a friend.  
So ask the wife to set a place,  
And tell the boy to wash his face—  
I'm coming out in any case  
    Before the evening's end."

We often come to town, I fear,  
Where friends are old and friends are dear,  
And never tell them we are here,  
    And silently depart.  
Yet, of the business we attend,  
What brings us half the dividend,  
What more important than a friend,  
    Investments of the heart?

COME ON HOME

Good friends, wherever you may be,  
I hope as good a friend as he  
You are, with his philosophy  
    Of friendship ever true.  
For life's a journey, mile by mile;  
I hope you take the time to smile,  
The time to stop a little while  
    And visit, passing through.

THE PATH AROUND

The path around the house—the way  
The common folks use ev'ry day,  
Near neighbors, and the family—  
Why, that has always seemed to me  
The very best of all to be!

Of course we have a sidewalk there  
In front that's swept and kept with care.  
The big front door it leads you to,  
And knock and they will welcome you—  
But that's the way that strangers do.

But not "the folks," your very own.  
Between the boards the grass has grown,  
The front door way. An endless tide  
Keeps smooth and hard and glorified  
The little path around the side:

The children laughing with delight  
When school lets out; and then at night  
Comes Father, weary with the day,  
Yet glad to work if only they  
Can grow and learn and run and play;

The friends who friends have always been;  
The neighbors who have just run in;  
And all of those who never need  
An invitation first to read  
Or any etiquette to heed.

## COME ON HOME

The folks who really love you come  
Around the house. It seems that some  
Will use the front door to the end—  
But, when around the house they wend,  
Well, then you know you've got a friend.

The front's for strangers and for style,  
The calling card and frozen smile;  
The path around is set apart  
For folks who aren't proud or smart,  
But walk right into house and heart.

## THE PERFECT HOUSE

There is a house, a perfect house, that sets upon  
a hill,  
A house with trees and grass around, where all is  
sweet and still,  
Exactly near enough to town, yet far enough  
away—  
It is the house, the perfect house, we mean to build  
some day.

There is a house where never noise comes pour-  
ing from the street,  
There is a house where ev'rything is perfect and  
complete,  
In Winter warm, in Summer cool, a house with  
comfort filled,  
A house, a home, a heaven here—the house we  
mean to build.

There is a living-room that's long, a fire-place at  
the end—  
A place to sit and smoke a pipe and visit with a  
friend.  
There are some leather rockers there, and walls  
of quiet tone—  
Oh, it's a refuge and a rest, the house we mean  
to own.



And ev'ry bedroom has a bath and ev'ry bedroom  
air,  
And there's a linen closet large, so handy to the  
stair,  
An attic playroom where the toys, the children's  
toys, are spilled—  
The children, too, will love the place, the house we  
mean to build.

The city flat, the crowded house, still they must  
do awhile;  
But Wife and I we sit and dream, we sit and  
dream and smile.  
But I, I get a little bent, and Wife a little gray—  
Perhaps we shall not need the house we mean to  
build some day.

## THE PHILOSOPHY OF FISHING

The philosophy of fishin', as I understand it, man,  
If you can't git what you're wishin', is to take the  
thing you can.

If I couldn't land a muskie I would try to ketch  
a trout;

And I ain't too big and husky for to pull a blue-  
gill out.

The philosophy of fishin' is to fish your level best,  
Makin' that the first condition, makin' that the  
final test.

Then, whatever has prevented, if the wind was  
maybe wrong,

You will likely be contented with whatever comes  
along.

The philosophy of fishin' is to want a whale, or  
more,

But to give a perch permission if he wants to  
come ashore.

Bait your hook for bass, my brother, but if bass  
should never strike,

Just be glad for any other, if it's nothin' but a pike.

The philosophy of fishin' is a good philosophy,  
And whatever your ambition, or whoever you  
may be.

COME ON HOME

If I couldn't land a muskie I would try to ketch a trout;

And I ain't too big and husky for to pull a blue-gill out.

## COME ON HOME

### PICKENSVILLE

I ain't so strong for fancy names  
For anything—for men or critters.  
Now, Jim's a better name than James—  
It ain't the label, it's the bitters  
That matters most of all to me  
With rheumatism in the knee.

I recollect a fellah come  
And settled over in the holler  
And give this rural region some  
New name he thought we ought t' foller.  
But Pickensville it was, and is,  
In spite of all this talk of his.

And "Springbrook Farm" I think was how  
He called the place the Sanders sold him,  
A place you couldn't raise a row,  
As anybody could have told him.  
It sounded sort of nice and sweet,  
But that don't grow no corn or wheat.

He had it painted on a sign  
Upon a prominent location,  
The stump of what was once a pine,  
And settled down to slow starvation;  
Because he had (I mean no harm)  
No spring, no brook, darn little farm.

COME ON HOME

Instid of helpin' advertise

    This farm of his, this fancy boostin',

I think it made you realize

    There wasn't any angels roostin'

Around the place, or patron saint—

Just made you see just what it ain't.

And Pickensville this town'll stay,

    Because it fits the town precisely.

That's good enough for ev'ryday,

    It suits us people very nicely.

It always was and always will

Be good enough for Pickensville.

## THE PILLARS OF A HOME

There are four pillars of a home:

The first of these is Love.

However glorious the dome,

What turrets rise above,

With that foundation you must start,

The firm foundation of the heart.

And Truth. Love must not be deceived,

Or love itself will fail.

You must believe and be believed;

The house without is frail.

For happiness alone abides

Where common confidence resides.

You must have Thrift. Extravagance

The proudest house decays.

To plan and not to leave to chance

Assures the future days.

You must have sense ahead to see

Beyond today's prosperity.

You must have God. To meet the shock,

Temptation to withstand,

Your house must rest upon the rock

And not upon the sand.

No house is strong enough to bear

The load of life without His care.

COME ON HOME

These are the pillars straight and strong  
From which your roof must rise;  
For such a house will smile with song,  
Yea, touch the very skies.  
You must have each, you must have all;  
Without these four your house will fall.

A PINE TREE AIN'T A MAPLE

Old Crazy Pete he says to me,  
"A pine tree ain't a maple tree,

"A tamarack it ain't an oak."  
"Of course," says I. "Now what's the joke?"

"Just this: At times a wife or boss  
(They're much alike—it's hoss and hoss)

"Expect an oak to be a pine—  
Or so, at least, have all of mine."

"I guess that I don't follow you,"  
Says I, "or what you're leadin' to."

"The oak is strong," he says. "It ain't  
As soft as pine for takin' paint.

"For hardness maple sure is good,  
But it don't give like other wood."

"Of course," says I, "they differ; each  
Has its own value—even beech."

"Just so. The man who's built to lift  
Won't likely have no other gift.

"The man who's handy with his brain  
Won't never bust no lawggin'-chain.



COME ON HOME

"The good providers seldom lead  
In table manners takin' feed.

"Whereas, upon the other hand,  
The loafer's manners may be grand.

"I guess we all are just like these—  
Have certain virtues, men and trees.

"And yet some women set and bawl  
Because their man ain't got 'em all.

"I guess they ought to just be glad  
We had the virtues that we had

"And not be sad because us folks  
Ain't tamaracks as well as oaks."

This Pete is sure a crazy gink—  
But not as crazy as you think.

THE POET'S SONG

Mine not the song that wants to be  
Embalmed in some anthology,  
That some professor must explain  
To some distracted student's brain—  
No, if you look for words so long  
They puzzle you, mine not the song.

But if the ordinary phrase  
Of ordinary folks and ways  
Has music in it anywhere,  
If simple things, like love, and care,  
And God, and family, and land,  
If things that children understand

Have any value, I will sing  
For prince or pauper, slave or king,  
Yes, sing my song, and hope to find  
The common heart and common mind—  
Sing not because I want your praise,  
But sing my song myself to raise.

For song that can't be understood  
I do not think is always good,  
And verse obscure with hidden truth  
Is not an aid to eager youth;  
And hearts a-hunger do not seek  
For lofty passages of Greek.

COME ON HOME

I want to help you if I can,  
The lonely woman, toiling man;  
But if you do not care to hear,  
Think not that *I* shall shed a tear;  
I'll take my pack and trudge along,  
For *I*, at least, have had my song.

THE POINT OF VIEW

I guess it is all in the point of view—  
That a joy is a joy or a pain a pain,  
That a thing is easy or hard to do,  
That the heart will sing or the heart complain,  
According to how it appeals to you.

There's a little house by the P.R.R.—  
I bet you have passed it lots of times  
As you sat alone in your parlor car—  
Perhaps you've seen how the ivy climbs,  
Hiding each crack and stain and scar.

Yes, I know you have. That's an ivy vine  
That you seldom see in a land so young.  
I planted it back in '59,  
And through all the years like a friend it's clung  
To this little old humble house of mine.

And the roses, too, you must have seen—  
Two perfect ones by the open door,  
As pink as the cheeks of a fairy queen.  
On the southward side there are seven more,  
White, yellow, and all of the shades between.

And here I water and 'tend and prune  
And watch and gather and fool along  
And know about all there is of tune  
And hear about all there is of song—  
And that's a heap in the month of June.

I figure you see me, riding by,  
You busy man with your big affairs,  
And think what a life to live, to die  
Of all of the wide world unawares.  
But it's all in the point of view, say I.

You may pity me. It's a funny thing,  
But I never pity myself at all:  
I stir the ground when the robins sing,  
And then it's Summer, and then it's Fall,  
Along comes Winter—and then it's Spring.

I guess it's all in the way you see,  
I guess it's all in the view you take;  
And you needn't sorrow nor sob for me  
When you think of the wealth that others  
make—  
For I'm not as poor as I seem to be.

PRIVATE HILL

I jumped right in and I crossed the sea  
And I done my bit in the infantry  
For Freedom's flag and Freedom's shore,  
The rights of little nations, or  
Whatever it was we was fightin' for.

I wasn't none of your second loots—  
I was just the guy that the gunner shoots.  
For you got to have in a war like that  
Some privates, too, when the guns rat-tat  
For the folks to do their shootin' at.

The general he got bigger pay  
But I guess I was needed, in a way;  
For at half-past four or half-past three  
In the cold gray dawn when a shell went whee-e  
The guy it was lookin' for was me.

I was Private Hill when I went in,  
And a private I come out ag'in.  
I didn't git no croy de gore,  
But I ain't mad and I ain't sore—  
It's enough for me that I won the war.

QUEER FOLKS

"Some folks seem so queer and quaint:  
Wearing denim, saying 'ain't,'  
Men without a collar on,  
Girls without a bit of paint—  
Almost ev'rywhere we've gone,  
Through the mountains, by the sea,  
Quaint and queer they seem to be.

"Queer and quaint so many are:  
Come and stand around your car,  
Look you over up and down;  
You will find them near and far,  
Almost ev'ry little town,  
Girls with bonnets, men with pipes—  
I just love to study types.

"Some folks seem so quaint and queer;  
Here they live year after year;  
How they stand it I don't know.  
What amusement is there here?"  
Nothing much, perhaps—although  
Now and then a car goes through  
With some people such as you.

THE QUIET HOUR

Some love with love desiring to possess,  
A crimson passion like a scarlet flow'r;  
There is a better love, all tenderness:  
It is the longing for the quiet hour—

The shades drawn down, the fire of beech alight,  
The simple comfort of the inglenook,  
Shut in the home, shut out the dark of night,  
The knitting wife, the husband with his book—

And there they sit recounting all the day:  
The little triumphs of the busy mart,  
The things the sleeping baby said at play,  
These are the tendrils binding heart to heart—

Some tale from that great world he labors in,  
He labors in that he may garner this,  
Some household care, some message from her kin,  
And then the lights put out, the good-night  
kiss—

The shutters made secure, and turned the key,  
And then the fields of sleep to wander through—  
This, wives and husbands, marriage ought to be,  
God grant that this is what it is to you.



THE REMEDY

Some folks can't sleep. "Insomnia"  
Is what they call it, I believe.  
All night in bed they gee and haw  
And roll around and fret and grieve.  
They close their eyes, they count the sheep,  
Try ev'ry cure that there can be,  
But still they cannot go to sleep—  
I'll give you all a remedy:

Some warm and sunny afternoon  
When you don't need a coat or vest,  
When you are lazy as a loon  
And all you want to do is rest,  
Just take that path beyond the stile  
And climb up yonder on the hill  
And listen for a little while  
To that old saw in that old mill.

Just lie right down upon your back  
And look straight up to where it's blue,  
Or underneath a tamarack  
The Summer breeze is soughing through—  
Your mattress just the velvet grass,  
As sweet as perfume, soft as fur,  
Just lie and watch the clouds that pass  
And listen to that sawmill purr.

And I will gamble, Mr. Man,  
 In spite of worries that annoy,  
 You will forget to scheme and plan,  
 Will slip right back and be a boy.  
 Your little troubles will be gone,  
 The bills to pay, the points of law,  
 And pretty soon you'll start to yawn,  
 Your lullaby the singing saw.

First thing you know you'll shut your eyes  
 And lie and listen to the hum;  
 Those ills will seem not half the size,  
 Those monthly bills not half the sum.  
 And then in, oh, an hour or so,  
 You'll sit bolt upright, feeling cheap,  
 And rub your head and say, "You know,  
 I do believe I've been asleep!"

## REMEMBRANCES

When near the end, she called us all around  
 And gave to each some trinket she had found  
 Among her little treasures—gave to one  
 A doily her failing hands had done,  
 A book to me (the lines she most admired  
 Her hands had marked before they grew too tired),  
 To one her beads, to one her simple ring—  
 Some little treasures for “remembering.”

Remembrances—as though we had the need!  
 The book is here—my eyes too full to read—  
 And so with all of us and everything—  
 The beads, the doily, the little ring.  
 Yes, we remember her—but not by these  
 Remembrances she thought our hearts would please  
 With solemn happiness when she had gone—  
 These little memories we gaze upon.

She left us more—a holy souvenir  
 Of her sweet self—she left a Presence here:  
 She sits again at table; on the stair  
 We pause a little—she has lingered there;  
 The garden path, the seat beneath the vine—  
 Around them now both rose and memory twine.  
 Her little gifts are 'shrined upon the shelf—  
 For all around the house she left Herself.

## REMORSE

There is another reason why,  
Great God, I want to pass your sky,  
And pass your gate, and search the throng,  
And seek one voice in heaven's song,  
And walk the streets, and ev'rywhere  
Until I find my mother there—

There is another reason why:  
Because, when I have found her, I  
Shall say: "My mother, I am here  
To ask forgiveness, Mother dear—  
Not ask forgiveness of the Throne,  
To ask forgiveness of your own.

"For once I scoffed at things you said;  
And many a night you bowed your head  
And prayed for me—and prayed in vain—  
And yet tomorrow prayed again.  
Yes, many a hair of gray you wore  
That God shall make me answer for.

"For once I scoffed at counsel, scorned  
The mother-love that wept and warned;  
Yes, once I laughed at wisdom, turned  
Away from where your candle burned  
To follow through the crimson nights  
The brighter glow of dancing lights.

COME ON HOME

“And then one morning I awoke—  
And, Mother, it was truth you spoke.  
The lights were out, the roses dead—  
Oh, Mother, it was truth you said.  
My better self that better dawn  
Came home again—but you were gone.”

And that's the other reason why,  
Great God, when mine the hour to die,  
I long to enter heaven. Let  
Me tell her, tell her even yet—  
Although I be a soul accursed,  
Oh, let me see my mother first!

RESEMBLANCE

Lord, make me something like my dad:  
Give me a little of his will,  
That good old stubbornness he had  
That helped him up the hardest hill,  
Content to wait and work and fight,  
Believing always he was right.

Lord, make me like my mother, too:  
Give me a little of her song;  
She laughed at life, and saw it through,  
And never clung to sorrow long,  
Yet watched a thousand islands fade  
For every port she ever made.

Lord, make me strong and make me glad,  
With hands to work and heart to sing,  
In all my labor like my dad,  
And yet like her in ev'rything—  
With changeless smile and changeless oath,  
Lord, make me something like them both.

RIGHT NOW

"Some other time perhaps you can,"  
They always say. The picture show,  
A horseback ride, a doll, a fan,  
Or any place you want to go,  
Our parents always seem to say  
Perhaps we can some other day.

They never tell you that you can't—  
It's just "not now." Whatever thing  
It is you see, it is you want,  
They never say right out, biff-bing,  
You can't, when on their knees you climb;  
Perhaps you can "some other time."

I wish that I could think of just  
One thing that I could really do;  
But, my, it always seems I must  
First pester them a week or two.  
I wish that I could think, somehow,  
Of something I could do Right Now.

A ROSE FROM MOTHER'S GARDEN

The rose that was the last to fade was one his  
mother brought,  
Though on his grave so many laid some lovely  
floral thought;  
But, when the flowers of friendship died, I came  
his bed to see;  
And still her rose the sun defied and lingered  
tenderly.

Oh, there were richer tributes there that came  
from richer hands,  
The fragile blooms of hot-house care—but Nature  
understands;  
The rose from Mother's garden still lived on amid  
the gloom,  
And so her fond affection will survive the closing  
tomb.

For that red rose from out-of-doors had known the  
stress of strife,  
Had known the thunderstorm that pours upon the  
hills of life,  
Had lifted after every rain its head above the rest,  
Made stronger by its hour of pain, when pain had  
been the test.

A rose from Mother's garden!—so a mother's love  
survives  
The storms that come, the storms that go, each  
season of our lives;



COME ON HOME

And when the last rose on the grave, yea even hers,  
is gone,  
Her mother-love, as sweet, as brave, will blossom  
on and on.

## COME ON HOME

### SALLY

Give me the song of the linnet,  
Give me the lilt of the lark,  
Give me the meadow a minute,  
Give me a stroll in the dark.  
Give me the dawning up yonder,  
Give me the sun in the west,  
Give me the woodland to wander—  
You may have all of the rest.

You take the gold of the palace,  
Give me the gold of a dream;  
You take the glittering chalice,  
I'll take a drink from a stream.  
You take the noise of the brasses,  
Bugles to welcome the guest,  
Give me the breeze on the grasses—  
You may have all of the rest.

You take the fame and the glory  
High on the rocky ascent,  
You be the hero of story,  
Give me the joy of content.  
Give me the house in the valley,  
Give me the babe on my breast,  
Give me the love of my Sally—  
You may have all of the rest.

## COME ON HOME

### THE SECOND FIDDLE

I like the little fellows who don't count for very  
much:  
It isn't from the 'cellos that you get the finer touch;  
The roaring of the basses and the rattle of the  
traps  
May have their proper places in the harmony per-  
haps;  
But down there in the middle, inconspicuously  
there,  
Is the little second fiddle that is carrying the air.  
The crashing of the cymbal shakes the ceiling  
with its "Blam!";  
The piccolo is nimble; "Boom!" you hear the  
drummer slam;  
The trombone slides and screeches; "Tut, tut, tut,"  
the proud cornet  
Just a little higher reaches than it's ever tutted yet;  
The Main High Diddle Diddle runs his fingers  
through his hair—  
But the little second fiddle still is carrying the air.  
We talk about the bosses with the big and busy  
brain,  
Making profits, taking losses—but the boss would  
boss in vain  
If he didn't have assistance, someone handy he  
could trust;  
He would never go the distance, and the company  
would bust.

COME ON HOME

Here's the secret of the riddle of successes ev'ry-  
where—

There's some little second fiddle that is carrying  
the air!

SOME DAY

We know that there is sorrow,  
We hear about defeat;  
But that is all tomorrow,  
Or someone down the street;  
Yes, grief is something far away  
It always seems, and then some day—

Some day the olden danger  
Comes nearer to the door;  
The shadow of a stranger  
Appears upon the floor;  
We had forgotten how to pray,  
Forgotten God, and then some day—

Some day, somehow or other,  
We need the old belief;  
Let us remember, brother,  
In joy as well as grief;  
Lest we, perhaps, forget the way,  
And lose the light, and then some day—

## COME ON HOME

### SOME OTHER TIME

I told him we our game would play  
Some other time, less busy day;  
And so he sighed and went away.

A smile upon his features died;  
He bit his lip, and turned aside,  
His childish heart unsatisfied.

I heard the patter of his feet  
Go down the stairs and down the street,  
Some playmate there perhaps to meet.

I heard a fool go speeding by;  
I heard a car, I heard a cry;  
Now that's a year ago, and I—

So many things had greater claim,  
Some other time we'd play our game—  
Some other time that never came.

SOMETHING COMING IN

Of all the comfort you can get  
In any way you ever met,  
To make a fellow feel inside  
And up and down and through and through  
Secure and sort of satisfied,  
There's nothing that can comfort you  
Exactly like a little tin,  
Like having something coming in.

There's lots of joy a man can buy,  
And so he should, and so do I.  
But, after all, I never found  
A greater comfort anywhere,  
Although I've looked a lot around,  
Than putting what I had to spare  
Of money where it would begin  
To bring me something coming in.

Who makes his money easily,  
Or makes it hard, it seems to me,  
Has ev'ry reason he should lay  
A little of his money by;  
If easy, for a harder day;  
If hard, because he ought to try  
A little greater ease to win  
And have some money coming in.

You'll find a lot of tinsel toys  
Along the road, and tinsel joys.

COME ON HOME

But, for a pleasure that will last,  
When harder days are right ahead  
And days of easy youth are past,  
There's not a thing, as I have said,  
Like just to sit and smoke or spin  
And have some money coming in.



SOMETHING FOOLISH

I buy some things I can't afford  
A lot of times, I must admit;  
Though what I have I try to hoard  
And practice thrift with all of it,  
I sometimes see in someone's store  
Some trifle I've a longing for  
That really isn't on my list;  
Down in my pocket goes my fist—  
But not for clothes or fancy lids;  
The article I can't resist  
Is something foolish for the kids.

I walk right past the things I want,  
Right past the things perhaps I need,  
The joys I'd like to have, and can't:  
Some book that I would like to read,  
A better hat, a newer tie,  
I see them all, and pass them by—  
But notice every little while  
A toy to make the children smile,  
And, though my purse perhaps forbids,  
Rush in and spend my little pile  
For something foolish for the kids.

I hope I never shall become  
A man who money throws away;  
I want to have a little sum  
Saved up against a rainy day.

COME ON HOME

I hope I only want, O Lord,  
The things I really can afford;  
And yet, O Lord, I pray to you  
I'm not so thrifty through and through,  
Though wisdom frowns and thrift forbids,  
That I don't spend a little, too,  
For something foolish for the kids.

## SOME YOUNGSTER'S DAD

The greatest man who ever was,  
He isn't king or president.  
You never heard of him, because  
He didn't anything invent,  
Or write a book, or form a trust,  
Or sing a song to make us glad,  
Or win a battle—he is just  
Some youngster's dad.

You talk about your Washingtons  
And Grants and other persons great.  
They may be big—but to our sons  
They're rather vague at any rate.  
But Dad, their dad! He's here and now,  
The best a fellow ever had;  
There's one great person anyhow—  
Some youngster's dad.

"My dad makes lots of money." "Mine  
Can knock a ball a half a mile."  
"My dad can play a jews'-harp fine."  
"Mine keeps us laffin' all the while."  
"My dad could lick a wildcat—gee,  
You ought to see him when he's mad!"  
You have to be a man to be  
Some youngster's dad.

COME ON HOME

"My dad he used to have a horse—"  
"My dad can shoot ducks on the wing."  
"My dad's the best man on the force—  
He ain't afraid of anything."  
"My dad will run for Congress, too,  
And beat the Democrats so bad—"  
Oh, lucky fellow man, are you  
Some youngster's dad?

The man who sits upon a throne  
Or other eminence as high,  
The man who far and wide is known  
And always in the public eye,  
Must watch his step for fear he fall—  
But, worshipped by some little tad,  
There is the greatest job of all—  
Some youngster's dad.

You may not worry much about  
Religion, which is right or wrong,  
But here's a thing, without a doubt,  
To keep you straight and keep you strong,  
Here's your responsibility,  
The greatest mortal ever had—  
Just to be worthy, friend, to be  
Some youngster's dad.

## THE SONG OF ELDER JONES

Old Isaac Jones he couldn't sing, not worth a  
tinker's dam;

And yet he joined in ev'rything, and sang "Just  
As I Am"

As loud as anybody there, as far as I could see,  
Poured forth his soul upon the air, but always  
off the key.

Right after we had let-us-prayed and passed the  
plate around,

Before the minister essayed theology profound,  
He'd say, "We'll join in singing hymn nine-hun-  
dred-ninety-two";

Then Elder Jones braced ev'ry limb, prepared to  
see it through.

The preacher read a verse aloud, the organ played  
a bar;

The choir arose serene and proud, as church choirs  
always are;

It sang with care the opening note, or maybe three  
or four—

Then burst from out the elder's throat that cele-  
brated roar.

It shook the rafters, shook the pews, it shook the  
countryside;

The elder longed to spread the news of glory far  
and wide.

## COME ON HOME

His heart was full of joy today, of joy he longed  
to shout,

And singing was the only way he had to let it out.

Courageously the choir withstood old Elder Jones'  
attack

And tried to keep, the best it could, the tune upon  
the track.

But, as the three sopranos glad gave forth their  
highest E,

Then Jones let loose with all he had and countered  
with a B.

A free-for-all, when that was done, was all there  
was to do;

The choir sang one tune, elder one, the congrega-  
tion two.

I often wondered which the more was heard around  
the thrones—

The E of those sopranos or the B of Elder Jones.

But I'm a little older now, as old as he was then,  
And know, or think I know, just how the Lord  
arranges men.

He judges singing, judges what we are from day  
to day,

By whether we're sincere or not in all we do and  
say.

The elder sang—he had to sing—his soul was full  
of grace;

And that's what counts in ev'rything, in church or  
any place.

COME ON HOME

The elder's joy the heavens shook, and not the  
singers' art:

The choir was singing from the book, the elder  
from the heart.

## SORES

This Johnny Jones he thinks he's smart,  
But now I bet I've got the start—  
The start of him—I bet that I  
Can prove it, too, and that's no lie.  
For yesterday I fell downstairs  
And bumped myself most ev'rywheres,  
And then today I tried to crawl  
Through some bob wire, and that ain't all:  
Right after I got over that  
I tried to play with Mary's cat;  
I didn't know she'd scratch or bite.  
(The cat, I mean.) She can all right.

I've got a bump behind my ear,  
Another lump right over here  
Above my eye. And, black and blue  
There's seven other places, too.  
I'm scratched and skinned: one leg of mine  
Six different spots, the other nine.  
Well, just a little while ago  
This Johnny Jones come over, so  
We counted up. You ought to see  
How jealous Johnny is of me.  
He counted every little sore—  
But me, I've got eleven more.



STARS REKINDLED

"He tells us nothing that is new:  
He calls attention to the dew,  
The village street, the mountain view.

"He preaches us the same old things:  
The same old truths, the same old strings  
He plays upon in all he sings:

"That happiness is being good,  
That men are all a brotherhood—  
Old truths our fathers understood;

"That God has made no class nor clan,  
No rich nor poor—a man's a man  
If red or white or black or tan;

"That these the walls that now divide  
The humble home, the house of pride,  
Great God in death shall sweep aside;

"That money does not make success,  
That genius is not great unless  
Employed for human happiness.

"He teaches simples such as these,  
Truths children learned at mothers' knees,  
Old scriptural philosophies.

COME ON HOME

"His sermons seem so trite and old;  
Why tell us things we have been told  
In volumes musty now with mould?"

Well, God be thanked for one to preach  
The good old truths, who tries to teach  
The maxims of our fathers' speech.

For still man lives and still man dies  
And still temptation 'round him lies  
That often shuts him from the skies.

With all our wisdom, all our skill,  
The road of life is shadowed still—  
We need God's truth to live God's will.

For thoughtless women, wayward men,  
Must hear these truths today—and then  
Tomorrow must be told again.

He tells us nothing old and trite,  
But truths as new as stars of light  
God must rekindle every night.

SUPPERTIME

I hear the bells, the village bells, at ev'ning from  
the kirk;

I see the men from hills and dells come walking  
home from work;

I see the lights, the little lights, that kindle one  
by one—

A hundred sounds, a hundred sights, declare the  
day is done.

Now red the little kitchen fires that blink through  
open doors

To welcome home returning sires, like signals on  
the shores—

A pillow in the easy chair, the little table spread,  
And just a glimpse from over there of quiet room  
and bed.

O men concerned with theories, who plan the  
nation's weal,

Such simple sights and sounds as these the answer  
may reveal—

The nation's hope is in the hearth, and not in marts  
of trade,

And all is well upon the earth at night when  
supper's laid.

The home, and hearth, and suppertime—you need  
no more to plan

To make a government sublime to serve the rights  
of man.

COME ON HOME

When honest men from honest toil come home to  
homes their own  
Then Freedom finds the fertile soil where Liberty  
is sown.

## THE TEACHER

For half a century, and more,  
The feet of boys forever wore  
A pathway to the teacher's door.

For fifty years he took his stand,  
A Latin grammar in his hand,  
And taught the children of the land.

A general, a great divine,  
Yea, men whose names with lustre shine,  
Learned Latin at that simple shrine.

For often here the great began  
To dream, to wish, to hope, to plan;  
Today was born tomorrow's man.

And so the teacher grew to gray;  
And fifty years have passed away  
When someone happens on a day

To pause before the teacher's door,  
The threshold that the children wore  
A half a century or more,

And asks, as that good man appears:  
"Are you not weary, tired to tears,  
Of teaching Latin all the years?"

COME ON HOME

A simple answer he employs  
To tell a teacher's holy joys:  
"I don't teach Latin—I teach boys."

God bless the teacher who can look  
Above, beyond, the open book,  
The one who teaching undertook

Not merely for the Latin's sake  
But for the holy chance to make  
Tomorrow's man, a soul to wake;

Whom nothing wearies, naught annoys,  
Who gladly all his life employs,  
Not teaching Latin—teaching boys.

## THE TEMPTER

When I'm a hundred miles from home,  
 Another hundred have to roam,  
 When many a night and many a day  
 I know I'll have to be away,  
 I wish the man whose job it is  
 To call the trains one call of his  
 Would please omit: Oh, yell and shout  
 But, Mister, leave my home town out.

For here I am, all set to go  
 Where duty calls, but longing so  
 For wife and children left behind.  
 And then some caller most unkind  
 A train announces, and the track,  
 The very train to take me back!  
 O Mister Caller, on my knees  
 I ask you, skip my home town, please!

Some night I know I'll fall from grace:  
 All started for some other place,  
 Some place a fellow has to roam,  
 I'll turn around and hurry home.  
 Some day that man that train will call  
 And I will drop my grips and all  
 And run and catch it if I can—  
 And who's to blame? That depot man.

## THE THINGS OF OTHER DAYS

I want to hear some songs of old  
And feel some oldtime things,  
Like "Silver Threads Among the Gold,"  
Because it always brings  
The calm and peace of other days,  
The simple life and quiet ways  
Of years that are no more,  
The waiting table, cheery blaze,  
The open cabin door.

I want to meet some friends of old,  
Some friends I used to know  
Whose friendship like a vine took hold  
And would not let you go—  
Who shared your cheer, in days of cheer,  
And in your hour of woe drew near,  
Perhaps who little said  
But shed a sympathetic tear  
And sat up with your dead.

I want to see some things of old  
That now I do not see—  
I want to see the marigold,  
The shady maple tree,  
The grasses that were sweet with dew,  
The sun that warmed the heart of you,  
The lily in the pond,  
And, up above, the sky of blue  
That seemed the blue Beyond.



This life is swifter than the old,  
We cannot stop to love—  
So much is bought, so much is sold,  
We miss the value of  
The things that are not sold or bought,  
The gifts that only loving brought,  
The words of honest praise,  
The friendly smile, the friendly thought—  
The things of other days.

THE THRESHOLD

Over the threshold they come and go,  
The kin we love and the friends we know;  
And we gaily laugh as they leave the door,  
For we never know they will come no more  
Over the threshold loved of yore.

Over the threshold—but as they pass,  
Age and infant and youth and lass,  
And whether they walk with sob or song,  
Whether with feeble step or strong,  
They leave a mark that shall last for long.

Over the threshold! O sculptor, you  
Wonderful, beautiful things may do;  
But none shall fashion and none shall own  
A thing as beautiful as the stone  
Carved by the footsteps we have known.

TIME SLIPS AWAY

It's weeks, no, months, perhaps a year,  
Since we have written anyone  
Down East. We are so busy here,  
So much to do, so little done—  
The stock to feed,  
And neighbors in,  
And land to seed,  
And then begin  
To cultivate, and harvest—so  
Time slips away before you know.

Perhaps they say tonight down East:  
"We haven't written—it's a crime—  
Out West in months, a year at least;  
But then we never have the time:  
We're either out,  
Or entertain,  
We're just about—  
About insane,  
With work, and places we must go;  
Time slips away before you know."

Perhaps some day our own affairs  
Of great importance—are they great?—  
Will let us write, and so will theirs;  
God grant we do not write too late,

COME ON HOME

Too late to tell  
Our love, alas,  
Or say farewell  
Before they pass—  
And yet it often happens so;  
Time slips away before you know.

## TINKERING

Dad was always tinkering, either this or that;  
He could mend 'most anything, table, tub or hat;  
He could fix a kitchen sink, putty in a light—  
Anything, just like a wink Dad could make it right,  
Even make a kite  
For a boy so he could play  
In the meadow Saturday.

When a dolly's broken arm made a baby sob,  
Filled her bosom with alarm, that was Father's job.  
He just made it good as new in a little while,  
Till, like sunshine breaking through, came the  
    baby's smile.  
Hammer, saw or file,  
Father always had them near,  
Curing many a baby tear.

Father didn't have so much; people used to scold  
'Cause he didn't have the touch turning things to  
    gold.  
Dad was always making right something that was  
    wrong;  
Father didn't have a sight, yet we got along—  
Had as much of song  
In our family, I guess,  
As the folks who more possess.

People used to criticize Father and his ways:  
Other men were otherwise, did the work that pays.

## COME ON HOME

Yet I often think that Dad, maybe, after all,  
Really more of pleasure had, though his wealth  
    was small,  
Than the men who call  
"Wealth" the money they save out  
For their folks to quarrel about.

All that Father had to give was a little home;  
Yet the longer that I live, farther that I roam,  
All the while I hope and pray, with both heart  
    and mind,  
When I have to go away, that I leave behind  
Memories as kind  
As I have of him, that bring  
Thoughts of Father's tinkering.

TO KEEP YOUR OWN

Beauty, my dear, is not of face,  
Is not of form alone:  
The years will come, and time erase  
The beauty you have known;  
Then you will need some other grace  
To keep your man your own.

To hold him here, so proud, so fond,  
Of beauty now the thrall,  
You need another, better, bond,  
When other years befall—  
In beauty's springtime look beyond  
The springtime, after all.

As one attracted by a rose,  
So lovely to the sight,  
Finds, as its lovely lips uncloze,  
The rose's soul of white,  
A perfume he did not suppose,  
An infinite delight—

So I would give the one I wed  
Beauty, and something more:  
Lips that are kind as well as red,  
Love in a golden store—  
These are the things, when youth is fled,  
To bring him to his door.

## THE TROUBLE MARKET

Once, I remember, when I came  
To Mother with my load of care,  
When I cried out I had to bear  
Too much of labor, wrong and blame,  
Yes, more than anybody's share,

A benediction in her touch,  
My good old mother stroked my head  
And wisely, tenderly, she said:  
"Although we work and suffer much,  
By sorrow often visited,

"If God should set a day aside,  
Appoint a time, appoint a place,  
Where ev'ry trouble, ev'ry trace  
Of weary toil and wounded pride  
And ev'ry problem that we face,

"We all could bring, that all might trade  
Their troubles with the others there,  
Lay down our heavy load of care  
And take the burden that has made  
Some other mortal gray of hair,

"When we had looked life's troubles o'er  
To make a better bargain then,  
When we beheld what other men,  
What other men and women bore—  
We'd all take up our own again."



## THE UNFINISHED GOWN

She sat a long time quietly  
When they had told her he was dead.  
She did not seem to hear, to see,  
And not a word of sorrow said.  
And then she lifted up her head  
And took her sewing. Could it be  
She did not care?—so lately wed,  
And wed to such a man as he?

She took no stitches, but her gaze  
Looked long upon the garment now,  
A dainty gown for happy days,  
When happiness had come somehow—  
As beautiful as was her brow,  
A gown that he would love and praise  
When she should come with stately bow  
And all her sweet, old-fashioned ways.

Well, they had told her he was dead.  
For him the gown she would not wear.  
He would have loved this ruching red  
Against the darkness of her hair.  
She took her sewing. Did she care?—  
For not a word of grief she said.  
She lifted up the garment fair  
And with white fingers snapped the thread.

## THE WEARY MOTHER

They fold her hands upon her breast,  
They close her eyes in quiet sleep,  
And come away and let her rest,  
In slumber wonderfully deep.  
No weary way she now must keep,  
A burden on her shoulders pressed—  
She knows the slumber of the blest  
That it was promised she would reap.

The sermon gives her much of praise  
In language beautiful. I fear  
That never eloquence of phrase  
Will wake her unaccustomed ear.  
Love long aloof now gathers near  
To speak affection many ways,  
That often in the dreary days  
It would have gladdened her to hear.

The crown of glory rightly won,  
The laurel on the mother's brow,  
We give when all her work is done—  
And yet I sometimes wish, somehow,  
That life's mad hurry would allow  
The busy daughter, busy son,  
Before her slumber has begun,  
To let her rest a little now.

## WE HAVE NO TIME FOR CHILDREN

We have no time for children, we have no hour  
for these,

We are the very busy, and life we hurry through;  
The world is full of pleasures, of riches we may  
seize—

We have no time for children, we have so much  
to do.

The little children hunger, but not for what we  
win,

They have their little longings, but this they  
hunger for:

The family a circle, that all may gather in,  
The merry evening playtime, the romp upon the  
floor.

The growing son his father so wistfully desires,  
And, oh, the little secrets our daughters long to  
share!

Perhaps we would be richer, be better mothers,  
sires,

By giving less of money and giving more of care.

## WE WANT OUR TOWN TO GROW

We want our town to grow, to be  
The city that our fathers dreamed,  
A city known from sea to sea,  
The better known the more esteemed.  
We want to build a city great,  
Yea, greater than our city now;  
Through every hour of changing fate  
We want our town to grow—but how?

We want our town to grow—but not  
In numbers only, only size;  
Our population is not what  
Shall make us mighty, make us wise.  
Now naught are Nineveh and Tyre  
Where huddled thousands used to dwell.  
Humanity will not inquire  
How many live here—but how well.

We want our town to grow in wealth—  
But grow in wealth that counts the most:  
Our children's happiness and health  
A better wealth, a better boast.  
In song, in soul, in sympathy,  
In love of good, in hate of sin,  
In loyalty, in unity,  
We want our town to grow—within.

COME ON HOME

And then we want to grow without,  
To tear away the ancient walls,  
Big brother to the world about,  
Whatever comes, whoever calls.  
We do not want to dwell alone,  
We do not want to stand apart;  
The better loved the better known,  
We want our town to grow—in heart.

WE WANT TO KNOW

Perhaps sometime we need no longer wonder  
If others love us, love or never care;  
Perhaps sometime through life we need not blunder,  
So often fail to find the sweetness there.  
So many days we want a little kindness,  
When unencouraged up the hill we go;  
So many days we walk the way in blindness—  
We want to know.

Perhaps sometime the loved shall hear the lover,  
Across the void perhaps a voice will call;  
Perhaps sometime our own hearts shall discover  
That there are those around us, after all.  
So many days so many clouds above us,  
So many lonely ways we have to go;  
O you who love, but never say you love us,  
We want to know.

WHAT ARE WE RAISING

“You know how it is, what with children around:  
You can’t have a lawn, as I guess you have found.  
They’re jumping, or digging, or driving a stake,  
A tent out of carpet they’re trying to make.  
They keep out the new grass, they ruin the old,  
No matter how much you may punish or scold.  
Just look—and here half of the Summer is gone;  
I’ve just about given up hope of a lawn.”

They may not remember that romping is wrong,  
And yet they seem happy and healthy and strong.  
The place may not look quite as well as it might,  
But the cheeks full of roses are blooming all right.  
The tent is a rather unsightly affair,  
But the girls and the boys don’t apparently care.  
The lawn looks uneven to people who pass;  
But what are we raising here? Children, or grass?

## WHEN DAD TAKES ME

My dad sometimes some little trip  
 Takes me along—and, my, it's fun!  
 He puts my (you know) in his grip,  
 A suit (not this, my Sunday one),  
 And other things that Mother, too,  
 Says I will need. (I never do.)

I'd always rather go with dad  
 Than go with her. (Oh, goodness me,  
 Of course I love her, course I'm glad  
 That she's my mother—as can be.)  
 But when my mother lets me go  
 With dad!—well, lots of things, you know.

For instance, Father doesn't scrub  
 Me night and day and all the time.  
 My mother keeps me in a tub  
 And says it really is a crime  
 How dirty children (me she means)  
 Can get, no matter how one cleans.

But Father, huh, he doesn't care,  
 Ask "How's your neck?" or "How's your ears?"  
 Or worry what you have to wear,  
 Or if a button disappears,  
 Dad doesn't watch you day and night  
 And say you simply are a fright.



COME ON HOME

Then we get home. "Just see that child,"

My mother says, "as black as ink!

I knew you'd leave him running wild.

My goodness, what will people think!

You'll never take—my, my, these men!—

That boy, with my consent, again."

## WHEN FOLKS ARE MARRIED

When folks are married we extend our warm congratulations—

We tell the couple married life's the happiest of stations.

We tell the bride the groom's a prince, the groom the bride's a beauty,

We talk a lot of constancy, and talk a lot of duty.

For Mary says that she'll obey, and John that he will cherish,

And Mary never will be mean, nor Johnny ever bearish.

We go in droves to see them hitched in golden bonds of marriage,

And throw our roses at the bride, our slippers at the carriage.

In fact we make a lot of fuss, no matter what the weather,

When Johns and Marys here and there are getting hitched together.

But that's no time to make a fuss—the time is ten years later;

For then, if all is well with them, their love is vastly greater

Than when we stood around in groups, each Ben and Bob and Betty,

Or chased them down the boulevard with leather and confetti.

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## COME ON HOME

If ten long years she's cooked his meals and still  
he likes her cooking,  
If ten long years she's looked at him and thinks  
he's noble looking,  
If he has stood her women friends, and she sur-  
vived his men ones,  
And each the other's relatives, the near and now-  
and-then ones,  
If he can like her sister's beau and she can like  
his mother,  
There isn't any doubt at all they really love each  
other.

For time's the test of married life. You can't  
tell much about it  
By just "I will" and just "I do," however loud  
they shout it.  
They have to have their ups and downs, their  
worry and their trouble,  
Have Father Time get out his scythe and punc-  
ture ev'ry bubble.  
They have to have their little hurts, and have to  
rise above them—  
When hubbies growl and women pout it often  
makes us love them.  
They have to have their little spats, and have to  
find forgiving,  
They have to have a lot of sense, and learn the  
art of living.  
If ten long years their love survives life's little  
irritations,  
That is the time to come around and yell "Con-  
gratulations!"

WHEN MOTHER STARTS THE  
APPLE SASS

Some fellah says that thoughts are things  
And fly around like bats on wings,  
And, if we only knew the way,  
That not a word we'd have to say  
But just to think it so intent  
That someone else knew what we meant;  
And I agree, because I know  
That Mother often works it so.

I've noticed it especially  
When we are havin' company:  
It's wonderful the way that Ma  
Can set on me and signal Pa  
And really never say a word  
That anybody ever heard,  
Yet lets us know there isn't much  
Of this or that or such and such.

Pa never thinks. He yells, "Come on  
And have some more!" when things are gone;  
Or me, I start to pass my plate  
Again, for Mother's grub is great.  
But, if we're short, Ma doesn't say,  
"We haven't very much today"—  
She acts as if she didn't hear  
And says, "Some apple sass, my dear?"

Or, if it's him that makes a break,  
She says to Father, "Pass the cake";

COME ON HOME

And no one notices at all  
The cake is large, the chicken small.  
They call it all "telepathy";  
I know it works with Pa and me;  
For more your plate you needn't pass  
When Mother starts the apple sass.

WHEN SONS AND FATHERS PART

You're going, Son, the world to face,  
Alone to make your way;  
I wish that words to fit the case  
I had the head to say.  
I wish that I could put in speech  
The yearnings of my heart—  
But youth must learn, and time must teach,  
When sons and fathers part.

Oh, I might tell you every hill,  
Might tell you every loss,  
But you would find some new one still,  
Some other kind of cross.  
I shall not warn of that or this,  
Point every foot and rod;  
But I don't think the road you'll miss  
You try to walk with God.

I have no doubt you mean to win  
A greater wealth than mine;  
I hope you do—but not with sin,  
Dishonor'ble design.  
Who wins his wealth in honest ways  
Will serve and bless the earth;  
But who for wealth his honor pays  
Pays more than wealth is worth.

COME ON HOME

You're going, Son—I give you this,  
And this is all you need:  
Your father's hand, your mother's kiss,  
This little Book to read.  
Seek there the light when lights are dim,  
God helped your parents thus;  
Remember home, remember Him—  
And, oh, remember us!

WHEN YOU'RE WALKING IN THE  
SHADOW

I have had a little sorrow,  
And have added to the store—  
For the troubles that we borrow  
Make the load a little more—  
I have had my darkened minute,  
I have had my weary day,  
With no warmth of Summer in it,  
And a shadow on the way;  
But my memory has brought me  
Then a lesson that I know  
That my dear old daddy taught me  
In the days of long ago:  
On the mountain, in the meadow,  
He would always say to one,  
“When you’re walking in the shadow,  
Then you know you’re near the sun.”

Now and then across the highway  
Falls the shadow of a hill;  
There are brambles in a byway,  
There are boulders in a rill.  
Now and then to ev’ry mortal  
Comes a morn without a lark;  
Heaven seems to close its portal,  
As we stumble through the dark;  
But if shadows seem to lengthen  
And if darkness seems to fall,  
Daddy had a thought to strengthen  
That should help us, after all:



COME ON HOME

On the mountain, in the meadow,  
He would always say to one,  
"When you're walking in the shadow  
Then you know you're near the sun!"

WHERE HOME IS

We have a cottage by the lake,  
A cabin in the hills;  
And now and then the car we take  
And feel the gypsy thrills  
Of tenting here and tenting there,  
The joy of camping anywhere.

Of "home" one night the baby spoke—  
And then, the babe to tease  
(For dads must have their little joke),  
I asked her, "If you please,  
I'd like to have you tell me what  
Is really home—you have a lot:

"You have Muskegon, by the shore,  
And Estes, where you climb,  
And there's the tent, intended for  
A home at any time;  
And there's the house we live in, too—  
Now, which is really 'home' to you?"

She looked at me with open eyes,  
In infant innocence,  
And said, with something of surprise—  
A father is so dense  
In asking questions such as his—  
"Why, home's wherever Mama is!"

COME ON HOME

And always it will be the same;  
Her heart the home will be.  
She keeps the lamp of love aflame  
For wanderers to see.  
However far her children roam,  
Wherever Mother is is Home.

WHERE THE KETTLE SINGS

I like to walk the quiet streets  
Of towns I do not know,  
Not where the whirl of traffic meets  
But where the tide is slow—  
The quiet streets I like to roam,  
The little neighborhoods of home.

A candle in a cottage burns;  
I pause awhile and dream;  
Tonight some laborer returns,  
Rewarded by its beam  
For all the heavy day of toil,  
The heat of sun, the grime of soil.

A rose-bush by the window, she  
A rose beside the door,  
Whose petalled lips are good to see,  
A baby on the floor—  
Oh, better this, the humble cot,  
Than palaces where love is not.

L'ENVOI

The theme is old—the cot, the wife—  
But we shall learn at last  
That this is all there is of life  
Worth while when youth is past,  
Whatever wealth ambition brings,  
That peace is where the kettle sings.

## WHERE TO GO ON SUNDAY

How to spend a Sunday—that's the problem now;  
Baseball, golf or movies, cards or dance, or how?  
Must be going some place—that's what Sunday's  
for;

If you don't go somewhere, Sunday is a bore.

Just around the corner, only down the street,  
There's an organ playing wonderfully sweet.  
There the bell is calling from our worldly ways,  
There the congregation sings its songs of praise.

There the good old Gospel lifts the hearts of men,  
Gives them consolation, gives them hope again;  
Just around the corner, just across the square,  
There's a place of worship, there's a house of  
pray'r.

Rest and recreation ev'ryone requires;  
But at times the spirit, like the body, tires.  
When your heart is heavy, when your life is flat,  
Why not church on Sunday? Ever thought of that?

WHY NOT TELL HER SO?

Of course you love her just the same  
As when at first you wed,  
Perhaps with not so hot a flame,  
But still the coals are red.  
The new-made blaze is hot with heat  
And ruddy with desire;  
But time shall give you something sweet—  
Peace and the quiet fire.

Of course you love her as of old,  
Your love she ought to know.  
New loves burn hot, new loves turn cold,  
With all the winds that blow.  
But time shall bring the steady blaze,  
The flame that never died;  
Yea, time shall bring contented days,  
The quiet ingleside.

Of course you love her as of yore—  
The years that you have shared  
Have made you love her even more  
Than youth has ever cared.  
Of course you love her just the same,  
Your love she ought to know,  
For time has brought the steady flame—  
But why not tell her so?

WIVES

I think no husband comprehends  
The life of woman, she who 'tends  
His house and home, the busy wife  
Who has her own, her humble strife,  
Like him who leads the larger life.

Refreshed, each morning man will rise,  
Go forth to meet the dawning skies,  
Go forth where victories are found,  
Where bugles blare and cymbals sound,  
While she takes up the daily round.

His life is color, motion, change,  
Each day's experiences strange;  
New faces, pleasures, problems, plans,  
The ever-passing caravans  
Of busy earth—this life is man's.

Today is like her yesterday,  
With simple labor, simple play,  
To her whose part it is to keep  
The cottage—mend, and bake, and sweep,  
And sew white linen for his sleep.

She has her problems none the less  
Than you in all your world of stress—  
The children's ills, and all the things  
That ev'ry day to woman brings,  
For ev'ry light some shadow flings.

## COME ON HOME

And so tonight, when you come home  
From that wide world that husbands roam,  
Remember all the day she stood,  
Made holy by her motherhood,  
To guard your home and keep it good.

The father absent, she has been  
Both father, mother—safe from sin  
Has kept the children you embrace.  
Your house you build, but woman's grace  
Has made your house a holy place.

You bring your wife a hurried kiss;  
But, husband, bring her more than this:  
Whatever heavy load you bear,  
Tell her tonight you know, and care,  
She bears her own, and equal, share.



## A WOMAN'S FACE AT THE WINDOW

There's a woman's face at the window, a face that  
has faded white,  
For there at the farther corner the world passes  
under the light,  
And the one you wait will yet come home if you  
watch far into the night.

There's a woman's face at the window, and many  
the men who pass  
Beneath the light at the corner, but never the  
one, alas!  
There's a woman's face at the windowpane, and is  
it rain on the glass?

She may be only a mother who waits for a roving  
boy,  
Or wife for a tardy husband delayed by the day's  
employ—  
But if it is you she 'waits tonight, God grant that  
you bring her joy.

“WON’T BE HOME TONIGHT”

We are so busy with important things,  
Things at the office, matters at the mill;  
For keeping on the job the business brings,  
And you must have an eye upon the till.  
An extra hour will sell an extra bill,  
And so a fellow to his office clings.  
Home calls us sweetly but we linger still—  
We are so busy with important things.

I sometimes wonder if we have it right,  
The unimportant and important need?  
The boy will miss his hour of play tonight,  
The wife the quiet hour you sit and read.  
We need the money, that is true indeed,  
But do we need so much? Perhaps we might  
With more of love with less of wealth succeed—  
I sometimes wonder if we have it right.

THE WOODPILE

I miss the woodpile of my youth,  
Where once I split the fragrant pine  
And learned a plain and simple truth,  
The need of hewing to the line.  
Each day, when I came out of school,  
Beside the chopping block I stood  
(It was my childhood's changeless rule)  
And split next day's supply of wood.

And sometimes it was maple, beech,  
As Winter days brought fields of white,  
To mountain heights it used to reach,  
The wood I had to split each night.  
One simple kitchen stove became  
The least of three to smoke and roar,  
Each with an appetite of flame  
That ate my pile, and yelled for more.

Or good white oak perhaps it was,  
Or even gnarled elm perhaps,  
Tough products of the cross-cut saws,  
And full of woe for little chaps.  
In later life some problems vast  
And various have been my lot  
But nothing yet has quite surpassed  
The problem of a white oak knot.

## COME ON HOME

The kitchen cookstove yelled for pine,  
The heater in the dining room  
Devoured that daily pile of mine,  
The parlor mountains would consume.  
A wash-day was a weekly woe,  
An ironing-day a sin to me,  
A baking day was doubly so—  
A party a calamity.

'Twas not the blizzards that we had  
Nor any thundering of Jove's  
That made the wintertime so sad—  
It was those three confounded stoves.  
When other boys could play, forsooth,  
My daily ax I had to clutch;  
I miss the woodpile of my youth—  
But I don't miss it very much.

WORMS

I always know when Spring is here at last:  
I've got a sign I can depend upon  
When birds are late, or other signs are past,  
Or overdue. I know when Winter's gone  
Not by no robins that may fly around,  
Nor flow'rs, nor any other fancy thing;  
But when the worms come crawlin' from the  
ground  
I know it's Spring.

Now, there's a prophet when he prophesies  
You can depend upon, as I have said.  
The robins fool you, and the very skies  
Are bright and blue, with blizzards just ahead.  
Trees bud too soon and hit another snow;  
The grass will start too early many a year;  
But when the angleworms begin to show  
Then Spring is here.

A white grub in the garden tells the tale  
A whole lot better than the poets can;  
He ain't no singer like a nightingale  
But, I insist, a better friend to man.  
Old Mother Earth has told him Winter's through,  
That Spring is here, in no uncertain terms.  
Sing songs of birds and buds like poets do—  
But bet on worms.

YOU DARNED OLD SKATE

John Kennedy's a friend of mine,  
There's not a doubt about it,  
Although he doesn't "thee" and "thine,"  
Although he doesn't shout it.  
His love he doesn't loudly state—  
In fact when we are meeting,  
"Hello," he says, "you darned old skate,"  
His customary greeting.

It isn't what you'd call polite,  
It surely doesn't flatter,  
But if you know the heart is right  
It really doesn't matter.  
The friend who's for you, early, late,  
In speech may not be clever;  
But when he says, "you darned old skate,"  
You have a friend forever.

Oh, other men with studied speech  
Will come with words admiring;  
And yet they very seldom reach  
A hand when you are tiring.  
The folks today affectionate  
Tomorrow crowd and shove you;  
But when they say, "You darned old skate,"  
Well, then you know they love you.

YOU JUST BEGIN TO GET  
ACQUAINTED

I've been down East and had a visit, and met a lot  
of dandy folks.

Life isn't such a burden, is it? We have our pic-  
nics, have our jokes,

We have our little get-to-gether, and now and then  
a friend you strike

Without no special fuss or feathers, just sort of  
accidental like,

Some pious man, some woman sainted—but here's  
the thing I take to heart:

You just begin to get acquainted about the time  
you have to part.

And, home again, we have our neighbors, whatever  
road we ever took,

Companions of our daily labors I guess we kind  
of overlook.

Yes, folks are all around to aid us, are near to you,  
are near to me,

Who mighty happy might have made us, if we was  
only neighborly.

Life ain't as bad as often painted—but, folks, you  
ought to make a start,

Or else you just will get acquainted about the  
time you have to part.

COME ON HOME

YOUR MESSAGE

Poet, priest and teacher,  
What your craft or creed,  
Pedagogue and preacher,  
All who aim to lead,  
Men are sometimes weary,  
Women sometimes sad,  
Life is often dreary—  
You must make it glad.

Not some mind above them,  
Wise and far away,  
You must know them, love them,  
You must be as they:  
Near to man and woman,  
Not a thing afar,  
Make your message human—  
That's what people are.

THE END



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